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HAS any Royal Commission ever tackled a more troublesome task than unemployment insurance? This week has brought to light the diametrically opposite views of the General Council of the Trades Union Congress and the National Confederation of Employers' Organisations. The Trade Unions want a non-contributory scheme, financed by the State by means of a graduated special tax on all incomes, and are strongly opposed to any reduction in the rates of benefit; whereas the employers want a self-supporting scheme, financed by strictly limited contributions, and providing limited benefits in accordance with the resources thus made available. The employers' scheme would, of course, involve the transference of a large part of the burden of unemployment to a relief scheme, under which benefits would be payable only on a basis of individual need. The divergence could not be sharper. And yet there is an important point of agreement.

* * *

Both employers and Trade Unions want the control of the scheme to be transferred to some sort of Statutory Commission. The employers want to make this Commission the guardians of the scheme's solvency, and accordingly to give it power to vary benefits as its resources vary; while the Trade Unions propose the Commission as an instrument for dealing with such special problems as arise out of the position of married women and casual workers. Having heard their leading witness, the Royal Commission has now gone into retreat for the purpose of preparing an interim report. We do not envy it its task, or share Mr. Snowden's optimism that it will be able to reduce expenditure to any appreciable extent without causing grave hardship and raising a political storm. However, we shall see within the next few weeks.

* * *

The huge meeting held in Manchester to protest against the Indian boycott of Lancashire textile goods urged the British Government to put strong pressure on the Government of India in order to bring the boycott to an end. India's refusal to buy Lancashire goods is doubtless unreasonable from an economic point of view, and it is true that the boycott policy is in the main profitable to the Indian mill-owner and detrimental to the Indian consumer. But do the Lancashire business men really expect the British Government or the Government of India to do much to help them? They ask for pressure in order to get the duties on imported textiles reduced. Do they think such a course politically possible at the present juncture? They preach the virtues of Free Trade to India; but it is not so long since a number of them were calling out for protection for themselves. We have every sympathy with Lancashire in its difficulties; but surely the worst possible way of dealing with the situation is to ask the Government of Great Britain or of India to take action which would be resented and resisted by the entire Nationalist movement. If we are to end the boycott, we shall end it by getting a reasonable political settlement in India, and not by taking a high hand. We cannot make people buy things against their will. As for the demonstration itself, the only thing to say is that it is a fantastic display of panic, which could not have been more welcome to the Swarajists if Gandhi and Nehru had organised it themselves.

* * *

When the Council of the League of Nations meets on Monday week it will presumably have to devote some part of its time to the minorities question, and we hope that it will show some resolution in its judgments and decisions. Europe is honeycombed with minorities groaning under real or alleged grievances—too many of them real. The worst sufferers of late have been in Poland; the troubles in Upper Silesia and in Eastern Galicia are fresh in everyone's mind. At the last session of the League Council efforts were made to remedy the mischief in both these cases. But in neither have they met with much success. In Silesia the Polish Government promised punishment of the guilty, compensation for the injured, and general measures of appeasement. Yet the past four months have produced little or no improvement. Some monetary compensation has been paid to the victims of outrages; but otherwise things remain pretty much as they were, and the attitude of the local Polish authorities to the Germans—which is clearly the decisive factor in the situation—is reported to be unchanged.

* * *

In Eastern Galicia the position is still more unsatisfactory. The complaints of the Ukrainian minority there of the Polish terror last autumn were referred by the League Council to a Committee of Three, under the chairmanship of Mr. Arthur Henderson. This Committee, as we stated a week or two ago, met and adjourned with a request for further information from the Polish Government. What was this further information that it wanted? Surely the facts were sufficiently established. Did the Committee adjourn in the hope that the Poles and the Ukrainians were settling matters by themselves? If that was the notion, it was illusory. There is no sign of a comprehensive settlement of the kind, and the Ukrainian deputies in Poland have formally denied that any serious negotiations for it have taken place. The failure of the League to grasp this minorities nettle firmly is lamentable. Ignoring it or making light of it does not help to lessen the danger. And the danger will obviously be enhanced, if the thesis favoured by certain Governments comes to be accepted—the thesis that Minority complaints, once settled in national courts, cannot be carried on appeal to the tribunals of international justice.

* * *

The Duke of Toledo—as ex-King Alfonso asks, with indifferent success, that he shall be called—is rendering creditable service to the Republic. He has, through *A.B.C.*, the Monarchist organ in Madrid, declared that he will do nothing to embarrass the new Government, which for him represents Spain. And he has warned his friends not to be *plus royalistes que le roi*. How much this warning is needed we do not know; but there does not appear to be any present sign of life among the Monarchist relics in Spain. If the Government has trouble it is more likely to come from the Left than from the Right. The date of the elections for the Cortes is not yet fixed, but some important constitutional changes have been decided on, regarding electoral areas, candidates and voters. The Chamber will have something over 400 members; women, priests and civil servants are all eligible; the franchise age is lowered from 25 to 23. Army reform also is being taken in hand, which, it is hoped, will give the country better value for less money. Most civilians—and doubtless a great many common soldiers—will welcome the reduction in the number of officers from 20,000 to 8,000, and of generals from 300 or so to 80 or less. Of the social reforms that are so urgently needed we cannot expect to hear anything before the new Parliament gets to work.

* * *

President Hoover's practice of evading the crucial issues of the hour was never more strikingly exhibited than in his address on May 4th to the International Chamber of Commerce. He insisted, of course rightly, upon the crushing evil of the world's armaments, the total annual cost of which he put at the stupendous figure of £1,000 millions; but he did not mention that the largest of all war budgets is that of the United States and that his own country shows the greatest percentage increase since the War. American organisations of many kinds are perpetually discussing disarmament, but Mr. Hoover is well aware that the most powerful American newspapers continue to press for the largest navy and air forces, and that no European nation has a war veterans' organisation so mischievously active in politics as the American Legion. Certainly Washington is nearer to a reasonable attitude on debts and reparations than at any time since the treaties; but it may be necessary to repeat the warning that the Hoover Administration is in no position to consider a revision of the debts. Executive and Senate alike are thinking at present of one event above all—the presidential election of 1932.

* * *

It is regrettable that the negotiations for the abolition of extraterritoriality in China should have broken down at the last moment. The Nanking Government are adamant against our claim for the exemption of Shanghai, Tientsin, Hankow and Canton, and their objection is on theoretical grounds natural enough. But so, on practical grounds, is our insistence, in the present state of affairs. Nor, practically, can we see that the Chinese have anything to lose by exempting these four ports for the time being; there can, of course, be no question of their retaining their privilege indefinitely. The Government have, however, taken the bold step of proclaiming the complete abolition of extraterritorial rights without the consent of the Powers. But they have decided to defer its coming into force till next January—which leaves them some opportunity for second thoughts. At the moment they certainly have other and more serious embarrassments to face. The National Congress of the Kuomintang, which opened on Tuesday, may, perhaps, go smoothly for Chiang Kai-shek. But the revolt in the South looks grave. It is headed by persons of consequence, and according to

the reports, the army as well as the Cantonese Government is determined to get rid of the dictator in Nanking. It is, of course, a long step from determination to achievement in China, and Chiang Kai-shek is not an easy mark. But if the movement against him gathers strength, the precarious peace of the Republic is likely to be once more violently disturbed.

* * *

Native witnesses from Kenya and Tanganyika territory have now given evidence before the Joint Committee on East Africa. They serve no special interest, but represent chiefs and commoners alike. Their evidence offers an instructive contrast. The witnesses from Kenya were openly resentful of the treatment which they have received from the Government. Alienation of land, a tax on grazing, and the poll-tax which is levied on women evoked their particular comment. They desired no quarrel, they said, with the whites, but if things did not soon change for the better a quarrel would be forced on them. They were perfectly polite, but their politeness was that of an armed neutrality. And definitely they were not in favour of Closer Union. "It is difficult enough," they said, "if not impossible, to reach the Governor now. How could we ever reach a High Commissioner?"

* * *

The Tanganyika representatives arrived at the same conclusion for very different reasons. They also would have nothing to do with Closer Union, for, like their late Governor, Sir Donald Cameron, they feared "infection" by Kenya. They have no illusions about conditions in Kenya, and want no regime of reserves, pass-laws and agricultural prohibitions. The Kenya witnesses had not a word to say on behalf of their Governor or Government; those from Tanganyika cannot praise their Governor too highly. They appreciate the difference between a Mandated Territory and a Colony and have no desire to risk federation with the latter. Those who doubted the wisdom of bringing over native witnesses appear to have been converted. They put their case clearly and logically and were not tripped up in the subsequent examination (which was frequently ill-informed). Africa is beginning to be able to speak for herself.

* * *

The Government has announced that it is taking new measures to stimulate the development of oil-production from coal by the low-temperature carbonisation process, and that the experiments which have been going on are to be extended to a commercial scale. Hitherto, the great difficulty has been the low quality and consequent low selling value of the oils produced by this method; but there have been important developments of late in the laboratory, and a good deal of pressure has been brought to bear on the Government to take the question up afresh, especially since Mr. Snowden decided to raise the tax on petrol in the Budget. Obviously, if we can produce oils of good enough quality for use as motor spirit from our own coal, we can both reduce our imports and do our mining industry a good turn. But it would be premature to say that the problems of getting good oil from our coal at a competitive price have been solved. We may hope they are on the way to solution; but experience of previous attempts should make us cautious in anticipating any early success on a large scale. The Government also announced further attempts to increase the use of pulverised fuel in the mercantile marine, and the availability of research grants to approved organisations for any promising new schemes or processes in either field. So far, so good. We are gradually learning to spend more on technological research; but it is doubtful if we are even now spending nearly enough.

* * *

The appointment of a Select Committee on lotteries and sweepstakes is understood to be imminent. A Select Committee is not as a rule a very effective body; a free debate, on the lines of that which recently took place on the Sunday opening of cinemas, would probably give the House a stronger lead. Some such lead is badly needed, for Mr. Clynes has by now manœuvred himself into an impossible position. His attempts to suppress participation in the Free State Derby Sweepstake have shown how strong are the currents of opinion which he has set himself to combat; the tickets he has threatened to seize at the ports are flaunted in his face in the House of Commons. With three departments of State—the Home Office, the Post Office and the Customs—busily manufacturing criminals, and with magistrates all over the country giving contrary decisions as to what is legal, the law is being thoroughly brought into contempt. We do not want this question of gambling to become the bugaboo that Prohibition has proved itself in America.

* * *

There are few of us who have not, at some time or other, been hard put to it to remember whether 12.15 a.m. follows upon noon or midnight. There are many for whom this particular difficulty renders *Bradshaw* unintelligible. For this reason, if for no other, the proposed change to the "24-hour clock," which is once again on the *tapis*, is very much to be desired. Under this system, as every Innocent-abroad knows, the hours from noon to midnight are numbered 13 to 24. The House of Lords on Wednesday expressed its sympathy with the change, and it is fitting that this body, which so often has been accused of putting back the clock, should for once point the way to more efficient clockery. There are only two objections to the adoption of Continental timekeeping. One is sentimental, the other arithmetical; notoriously, as a nation, we are not strong at adding up. But usage would soon make our new time-tables less irritating than our present ones.

* * *

Cricket is really fun once again, and the new system of scoring for the County Cricket Championship—15 points for a win outright and only 5 for a win on the first innings—has already justified itself. The Gloucestershire team which, under B. H. Lyon's leadership, has built up a great reputation for sportsmanship, brought off on Tuesday an amazing win against Surrey at the Oval. To find a precedent for it we must go back twenty-three years. Surrey's first innings yielded 258 runs; the wicket was then almost ruined by rain; and Mr. Lyon, realising that his chance of a first-innings lead was negligible, declared at 175 for 7 and went "all out" for his 15 points. The gesture was richly and dramatically rewarded. Mr. P. G. Fender, with a sense of the appropriate not inferior to Mr. Lyon's own, declared in turn at 60 for 6, leaving Gloucestershire to make 144 in an hour and fifty-five minutes. Hammond made the winning hit with three minutes to spare. Such magnificent endings are usually reserved for schoolboy fiction.

* * *

In urging the desperate case of the Foundling Hospital site last week, we omitted to mention the address to which sums of money should be sent. We have received several inquiries and subscriptions on its behalf. The address of the Committee which is organising the appeal is 93 Guilford Street, W.C.1, and there is still time. If the appeal should fail, subscriptions will, of course, be returned—but it must not fail.

CRIME AND PUBLICITY

CRIME, especially when there is sex in it, is first-class news. Indeed, with the exception of war, it is the best seller of all. The Rouse case is a good enough example; every detail of the crime, every fact about the past life of the accused man, every sexual incident that could be raked up, even a final "confession" which, in the absence of any evidence of authenticity, we must assume to be bogus—the whole unsavoury mess created dramatic interest and increased circulation. No wonder Lord Darling spoke strongly about this case in the House of Lords last week. Clearly such publicity may be harmful in two ways. There is the question of its general effect on the mental health of the community, and there is the more restricted but urgent problem of the prejudice which the publication of such material before the trial may create in the minds of the jury. We raised that problem last week in discussing the case of William Herbert Wallace, convicted of murder at Liverpool. As an appeal has now been lodged, we withhold further comment on that case. But the general problem of the influence of newspaper publicity on juries remains.

It is not, therefore, surprising to find Lord Darling hinting at newspaper censorship in sensational cases. The analogy of the law which restricts the publication of divorce reports naturally comes to mind. But the analogy only holds in part. Divorce is a private affair with which the public should not be concerned, but, when once a criminal charge has reached the courts, there are excellent grounds of public policy for making the proceedings common property. The ultimate sanction for the administration of justice is public consent based upon public confidence. To restrict the reporting of the proceedings of any criminal trial would inevitably tend to weaken and destroy confidence, and it would be obviously intolerable in the case when the accused is fighting for his life. It is vital not only that the man should have a fair trial, but that everyone should have a chance of seeing that it is fair.

In his evidence before the Select Committee on Capital Punishment, Lord Buckmaster put the matter forcibly:

> The widespread publicity of murder trials and the details of execution exercise, in my opinion, a most demoralising influence, but I cannot advocate any limit being placed upon such publication. Judges, juries and counsel should always perform their deeds in the public eye, and I am not prepared to veil or shroud this publicity in any form. I think, Sir, that this is absolutely essential to the proper administration of justice. The use that is made of the incidents is sometimes deplorable beyond all words, but these things must be done in public; and every person connected with them, from the judge right down to the solicitor's boy, must be subject to public criticism in discharge of their duties.

Clearly, Lord Buckmaster is right. On grounds of public policy the evils that may attend publicity are altogether outweighed by its advantages.

The problem, however, remains, whether there may not be a point at which limitation or restriction is advisable—whether the analogy of divorce reports will hold, not after an accused person has been committed for trial, but at the earlier stage of the preliminary hearing. The arguments for press publicity then are scarcely relevant, and the reasons for restricting newspaper reports in sensational cases to the single unvarnished fact that the accused man has or has not been committed for trial, far more powerful. One of the most disquieting facts about the many recent and sensational murder cases—the Rouse case, the Browne and Kennedy case, are immediate and obvious examples—was the suspicion that police evidence before the magistrates was of a nature to pre-dispose the juries to a verdict of guilty before the trial began. At the preliminary hearing the police often show a very natural disposition to urge every scrap of possible evidence against the accused. It is in the nature of the pursuer to become enthusiastic in the chase. Moreover, the police are constantly twitted by certain newspapers with the number of undetected or unpunished murders. It therefore commonly happens that a mass of evidence is brought before the magistrates which proves to be quite unsubstantial before the trial begins. If this evidence is of a sensational character it is fully exploited in the local, if not in the national, press, and whether maintained or not at the trial, it may remain in the jury's mind. There is, perhaps, an exaggerated belief in the infallibility of the police, and when juries find that the stories that they have already in their minds are ruled out at the trial, they are apt to attribute the dwindling of the case for the prosecution to the niceties of rules in regard to evidence. "Ah!" one may hear interested spectators mutter, "the police know, but all these tricky rules of evidence prevent them from using their knowledge." It cannot be too emphatically stated that that which is not evidence should never be allowed to be in the jury's mind.

Lord Birkenhead once said that the weakness of juries was that they sometimes found it difficult to distinguish between the fact that a crime had been committed and the question of whether the accused had committed the crime. This may be especially true of horrifying and brutal crimes, or of those in which the accused is a bad character. It may seem absurd, but there is a tendency for the jury to feel that someone has done this awful thing, that someone should suffer for it and to convict the man before them because he is the only person to convict. One correspondent in our columns to-day is so moved by the unreliability of juries that he suggests the total abolition of the jury system. He offers no alternative, and we are not disposed to discard so easily a system which offers so many and such well-tried advantages. But that does not excuse us from the effort to safeguard the jury system from the obvious dangers with which the sensationalism of the press tends to surround it. What is the use of the elaborate precautions which we take to keep the minds of the jury unprejudiced during the trial if there is a good chance that accounts of the case which have already appeared in the press have rendered their minds impervious to argument? We cannot see that damage would be done either to the community or to the accused person if the public had to wait for the details of the case until the trial itself. If Lord Darling and the other authorities he quoted in the Lords' debate are correct in their view that magistrates already possess the power to exclude the press from preliminary hearings, we are pleading not for new legislation, but merely for new practice. We should like magistrates to use their power in sensational cases. We want murderers to be convicted in this country, but juries are fallible anyway, and it is well to test their fallibility less strenuously than we do to-day in cases which make good newspaper copy.

A GOOD TAX GONE WRONG

MR. SNOWDEN'S land values cat is now out of the bag—or, at least, enough of it to enable friends and opponents to appraise its quality. It has been debated in the House of Commons with a fair balance of heat and light, and the speeches, in which the Creator and dukes and shopkeepers, Ricardo, Henry George and Lloyd George were bandied to and fro by honourable Members, make interesting reading. The Labour Party and the Liberals were, on the whole, well satisfied, the Conservatives showed every emotion from fury to amused contempt. Some regard the cat as a tiger, others as a badly disguised rabbit. To us it seems a cat which is good in parts—and we are more disturbed by the bad part than elated by the good.

Mr. Snowden's proposal is in essence quite simple, though its working out may be exceedingly difficult. There is to be a tax of one penny in the pound on the capital value of all land, with certain important exceptions. The valuation, which will begin on August 1st, will take some time (for there are from 10,000,000 to 12,000,000 separate hereditaments to be dealt with), and the tax will therefore not be imposed till 1934. The cost of the valuation Mr. Snowden reckons at between £1,000,000 and £1,500,000; he offers no estimate of what everybody would like to know—the yield of the tax. The exemptions include agricultural land—farms, allotments, market gardens—church sites, cemeteries, railways, and land owned by local authorities, as well as plots assessed at not more than £120. There is a wide difference, it will be seen, between this scheme and the Lloyd George land duties, which were carried so enthusiastically in 1903 and repealed so cheerfully after the war. Those duties were four in number, and were levied on increment values on sales of land, on benefit accruing to a lessor at the termination of a long lease, on undeveloped land, and on mineral rights. The last was left; the other three were abandoned because their yield was negligible and they had become a nuisance. The cost of the valuations, which dragged on for some five years, amounted to over £5,000,000, and the Exchequer did not get a quarter of that sum from the taxes in the whole nine years of their existence.

But Mr. Snowden is going to tax the ownership of land, not merely its sales. That obviously means—even at the comparatively modest rate of a penny in the pound—a substantial gain to the revenue, apart from the fact (if it proves to be fact) that the cost of valuation will be only the million or million and a half that the Chancellor assumes. So far, so good. But the assurance that Mr. Snowden is going to do very much better for the revenue than Mr. Lloyd George did is not the end of the matter. We have obviously got to consider the principles and the effects of his tax. Now, the principle that land is a proper object of taxation is fair enough, though the claim that it should be singled out as a more proper object of taxation than any other form of property is much more questionable. There is, in fact, no greater justice in levying a special impost on the holder of land than on the holder of War Loan or railway stock or Imperial Chemical shares. There may even be less—it will depend on the circumstances of the case, on the use to which the property is being put. One of the principal arguments for the taxation of land values is that it enables the community to take the increment which it, and not the landlord, has created. And another is that it is a potent means of combating the selfishness and greed of the owner by putting pressure on him to release land which is needed for public purposes. As Mr. Snowden says, "to restrict the use of land by the arbitrary will of its owner, enhances its price, raises rents, hampers industry, and prevents municipal development and the promotion of social amenities." Examples galore were given in the course of the debate—as they have been given a hundred times before—of the mischief that can be done by the baser sort of landlord. In so far as Mr. Snowden's tax will remedy that, we can all applaud it. But the trouble is that it will do more. In shooting at the birds of prey, it will bring down with them—or even instead of them—a great many innocent and desirable small fowl.

We are not pleading here for the innumerable owners who have bought a freehold house—often at a high price—and whom it would be ridiculous to class among the dukes, the speculative builders and the other wicked landlords. These people may or may not have a substantial grievance at having to pay a special tax of 20s. or £20. In any case, they are not likely to be comforted by such slogans as "God gave the land to the people," used in defence of a Bill which certainly does not restore His gift to them. But let us look at the matter from the public point of view. The scheme contains glaring anomalies, contradictions and dangers—some of which are forcefully commented on by Professor Trevelyan and Mr. Keynes in our correspondence columns. We are faced with a conflict between the admirable principles which inspire the Minister of Health in his Town Planning measures and the desire of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to find money. There are good ways and bad ways of finding money, and good methods and bad methods of trying to benefit the community. Is it good to tax playing fields (unless they happen to be owned by a local authority)? Is it good to tax woodlands, "beauty spots," and so on, which, though held in private tenure, are actually being used not primarily for private but for public advantage? Again, we are told that one of the merits of the proposed tax will be that it will force more land into the market. Under the Lloyd George duties the owner had no incentive to sell, said Colonel Wedgwood; now he will have a big one—and presently perhaps a bigger one, when the penny in the pound becomes three half-pence or twopence. No doubt, and what will be the result? A nice problem for the Minister of Health, who is trying to check "ribbon development," and a nice dilemma for owners of wayside land who have been prepared to make some sacrifice in assisting him!

These objections are not anti-Socialist objections. We are not joining hands with the *Morning Post* in attacking Mr. Snowden for his "vindictive Socialism." The fault we find with his scheme is not that it contains too much Socialism but that it contains too little. It is idle to say, as he said on Monday, that "by this measure we assert the right of the community to the ownership of land." A land tax in this form has no more to do with the public ownership of the land than the income-tax has to do with the public ownership of the cotton mills or coal mines. There is a case for eliminating private ownership, for the nationalisation or municipalisation of all the land of the country, or of such of the land as is wanted for public purposes at any given time or place. There is a case for confiscating land values created by the public. There is a case for limiting the right of the landlord "to do as he likes with his own." But it is a dangerous thing to mix your purposes. Mr. Snowden's aim, of penalising and coercing the land profiteer and the land-hog will have the support of many outside his own party. His penalisation of the good landholder and his burdening of land which, though technically private is in fact in public enjoyment, must cause profound uneasiness inside his party. As the proposal stands the growing movement towards preserving the beauty of the English countryside and the whole tendency towards substituting planning for sporadic and individual development are threatened. Perhaps Mr. Snowden, whose mentality still seems to be that of a Radical of the 'eighties, has not realised the blow he is striking at good causes. We hope that, even if it means the loss of some revenue, he will agree to this measure being purged of its grosser faults.

THE CONGRESS PARTY

[FROM A CORRESPONDENT IN INDIA.]

FROM speeches in Parliament and elsewhere it would seem that there is still considerable misunderstanding in England about the Congress Party. Some people treat it as an all-powerful body controlling every form of Indian Nationalism, and so organised and disciplined that Mr. Gandhi has only to give an order and everybody in the movement, from the Bengali terrorist to the frontier "red-shirt," will be bound to obey him. Others, including many retired officials, imagine that the Congress has remained unaltered since before the war, except that it has become more vocal and more bitter. The Congress Party in its modern form dates from 1916. Up till the death of Mr. Gokhale in 1915 it remained a small body of Liberal tendencies, drawn almost entirely from the professional classes. It made little attempt to enter into practical politics, and kept aloof from the agitations organised in Western India by Mr. Tilak, and in Bengal by men like Arabinda Ghose. It was a propagandist organisation, almost comparable with the Fabian Society, and more interested in framing policies than in putting them into force.

In 1916 Tilak and Mrs. Besant began a new campaign after the truce which marked the first two years of the war. They were both political realists, and they saw the need of an All-India organisation for their work, and also of better methods for publicity. The Congress was a well-known body with connections in all parts of India and outside. It could in fact provide the nucleus of the type of organisation needed, and Tilak and Mrs. Besant went to the Lucknow meeting in 1916, and proceeded to capture the Congress from the floor of the meeting. They chose the right moment. The members were ready for a change. The extent of the change can be gathered from the fact that in 1909 the Congress had welcomed the very cautious Morley-Minto Reforms, but ten years later decisively rejected the far-reaching Montagu-Chelmsford proposals.

Mr. Gandhi has been the principal leader since the death of Tilak in 1919, and the Congress membership has spread rapidly. It first gathered in most of the younger men of the middle class, and under Mr. Gandhi's influence attracted, especially during the Khilafat agitation, a strong section of the Moslems whom Tilak had discouraged. Many of these have drifted out of the Party, but the Congress has still a strong hold in certain Mohammedan districts, including the Frontier Province, and have rapidly extended amongst all classes of Hindus, Parsees, Sikhs and Christians. It has now got firmly established in every province, and even made slight inroads into certain Indian States. Its importance is partly due to its being the only political organisation in India which in any way resembles a political party in England. The other Indian parties are merely informal groupings of politicians, which make no attempt to help their members in their constituencies.

Up to 1929 the Congress Party was making some headway in the villages and small towns, and would occasionally help its members fight elections, or organise the boycott of an election when they were refusing to co-operate. In many ways it was not unlike the Labour Party about 1921, when it was beginning to get some hold upon public opinion, but was not troubled with the idea that it might soon have to take office. Like all bodies under such conditions the Congress Party tended to move more and more to the Left, either carrying its leaders, like Mr. Gandhi, along with it or else leaving them behind. Their yearly resolutions were a gradual *crescendo* movement culminating in the demand for complete independence in 1929. There seemed to be no more worlds to conquer by resolution, unless the Congress decided to turn Communist as a result of the revolutionary but rather nebulous Socialism which is popular amongst many of the younger men.

It was at this point that a new development took place. Up to 1929 the Congress was mainly propagandist. Its most active members might be described as belonging to the professional classes, though many of them had had little opportunity of practising any profession. Gandhi, however, happened to belong to a caste which is not usually connected with the professions. He is of the shop-keeping caste, and therefore finds it easier to establish connections amongst certain classes which were hardly touched by an orthodox Brahmin like Tilak, or a European like Mrs. Besant, or an intellectual idealist like Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. The most noticeable feature in Congress politics during the last two years has been the influx of the shop-keeping and industrialist class. Most of these are from Western India and the Punjab. They were the more willing to join an active Nationalist organisation because they had their own quarrels with the Government, especially over the currency question, and their old grievance about coastal shipping. They also began to see that if the Nationalist movement were successful there was a real chance of the transfer of the Departments of Commerce and Finance to Indian hands. A host of wealthy recruits began to join the Congress Party.

Until this last phase the Congress had always been an extremely poor organisation, dependent for its activities upon unpaid voluntary work. The working committee now found that they had large sums of money at their disposal, contributed usually through Mr. Gandhi. They began a new phase of activity, and the civil disobedience movement was organised on a scale which had hitherto been impossible. It had always been easy for them to draw upon the huge army of middle-class unemployed to get their work done, but the adhesion of the Western Indian industrialists enabled the Congress to turn the volunteers into whole-time workers. It is true that the amounts paid were small, usually about six annas a day, but it was enough to ensure the volunteers attending regularly, and it was also easier to enforce a little more discipline. At the height of the movement there were probably about 40,000 young men in receipt of such allowances. It made effective boycotting quite simple, and it is probable that those Indian mill-owners who were not boycotted must have recovered most of the half million sterling which it is estimated that the movement has cost during the last year.

Another great change in the Congress Party, which was most noticeable at the Karachi conference this year, is the growth of a stronger executive. Here again there is a close parallel to the Labour Party in England, which developed a strong official block as soon as there was any chance of its forming the Government. At Karachi both the subjects committee and the general conference were entirely managed by the platform group, which could count on a majority if any outside group tried to force a division. It would be difficult to say how far this is due to Mr. Gandhi's personal influence, which he owes to his great prestige outside the Congress, and also to being the connecting link between the ordinary Congress politicians and the industrialists. Another factor undoubtedly is the realisation that a long period of propaganda work and of passing vague resolutions is now coming to an end. Though the Nationalist naturally does not care to say very much until the present negotiations are settled, many of them are expecting that a new constitution will be granted, which will mean a real transfer of responsibility. Most of the business men and the professional classes are growing tired of the continual disorder, and anyone fairly closely in touch with the movement can detect signs of a change in outlook similar to that which took place in the Labour Party about 1923. To be extreme is no longer the easy and obvious way to power inside the Congress, though the Party itself will continue to pass vague resolutions of the kind common to all Left Wing movements throughout the world. At the Karachi Congress no resolution was passed which had not been drafted or approved by the " platform," and where the resolution had any bearing on practical politics, as, for example, the one allowing Mr. Gandhi to attend the Round Table Conference, care was taken to leave him complete freedom of action.

It may seem slightly paradoxical in England to describe the working committee of the Congress as an essentially conservative body, but it is more than a half truth. Most of those who are controlling the Party to-day are beginning to appreciate the difficulties before them. There are signs of impatience with those who wish to take too seriously some of the old slogans. The failure to settle the communal question or to prevent such outbreaks as the Cawnpore riots has emphasised the fact that the British are not responsible for all the troubles. The new Census figures, showing a huge increase in population, have caused many to wonder if freedom from " slavery " is necessarily going to cause an immediate return to the Golden Age. The new recruits to the movement are also a disruptive element. Many of them are Marwadis, a race who like to take their profits quickly, and they are already demanding their pound of flesh in a way which is obviously disturbing to the Mahatma, and extremely annoying to men like Jawaharlal Nehru. The latter is really afraid that his prophecy may come true, and the end of the bureaucracy be the beginning of a plutocracy. All these factors are helping to form a group of realist politicians inside the Congress Party, the chief amongst them being Mr. Gandhi himself. They are frequently obliged to talk in a language which has become conventionalised by forty years of incessant propaganda against British methods, but they remain a stable element, and if we can meet them fairly we shall probably find that, as in the case of the Labour Party, it is their conservatism rather than their enterprise which we shall be deploring after they have once come to power.

TIME FLIES

IN these days of sweepstakes, guessing competitions, and prizes that enrich the winner not for a day but for all time, it behoves a man to think seriously of what he would do if he won. To be prepared for all eventualities, even the most unlikely eventualities, is the part of a philosopher, and the news that he had drawn the winning number in a lottery should not take the wise man unawares.

As a rule, the winners of these great prizes, on first being interviewed, declare boldly that they intend to go on with their work. It is clear that great sums of money suddenly achieved make the imagination numb. Apart from this, there is in the idea of work much that appeals to the moral nature of man. A minor philosopher has said that work is vulgarised thought; but most of us, when we have recovered from the measles of youthful heresy, regard it more realistically as the prime necessity of existence—even, perhaps, as the prime pleasure. Having acquired the habit of work, we doubt whether in middle age we should be able to shake it off. As many a too industrious millionaire has discovered, one cannot learn to idle at the age of fifty. The idler, like the poet, must begin young. To grow accustomed to work is to experience a gradual change of one's entire nature. One is in the grip of something stronger than oneself, and from this even great riches can bring no ransom.

Hence, if anyone has asked me in recent years what I should do if I won a sweepstake, I have usually replied that, having got into the habit of it, I should probably be unable to stop working. This was my honest belief until the present week, for I had an uneasy conscience at the thought of doing nothing from one year's end to another. Yet, after a few days spent at Brighton, I am not so confident. I find as time passes so swiftly, as meal follows meal so rapidly, that it is difficult to imagine when work could be fitted into a normal and natural day. That time flies I have always heard, but I doubt if it ever flies so fast as when one is doing nothing. There is scarcely breathing space to read a newspaper. If I walk to the end of the West Pier, and put twopence in the slot of the gramophone that plays " Oh Donna Clara," the morning has gone by in a flick, almost before I know it has begun. If I sit down and look at the sea, the monotony of the waves pouring in a silver race towards the beach does not slow down the hours. A cormorant passes, a long black neck with wings. Half an hour later another cormorant passes. Nothing has happened in the interval but the wash of the waves under the pier. But one does not desire anything to happen. If one were afflicted with the supposed modern restlessness, there are amusements in abundance within a few paces—miniature golf, skeeball, shooting galleries, mutascopes with inviting photographs of women in various stages of undress, enough penny-in-the-slot machines to keep a tired business man distracted from his worries for a month, a bar, a phrenologist. But for these one has no time any more than for work. One is being rushed round the sun in one's deck chair too quickly. All one asks is that it should stand still for a few hours, and leave one to enjoy the sun.

In the afternoons I am more restless, for I have an object in life. As one that hath been long in city pent, I wish to go into the country and to see and hear birds, especially the migrants and, to be still more particular, the nightingale. It is raining heavily, but I am of a hopeful disposition. The rain cannot last for ever and, even if it does, I have before now heard the nightingale singing in sleet. By the time one has got the car out and driven to the nearest place that is worth driving to, a considerable part of the afternoon has gone. One must get away from the main roads, for, even if a nightingale were singing on a main road, its song would lose something of its enchantment amid the roar of passing motor-cars. One must therefore find an unfrequented lane. The worst of unfrequented lanes is that the copses likely to be the haunts of nightingales are usually situated at a part of the road at which it is impossible to stop without causing an obstruction. Another considerable portion of the afternoon passes in the search for the right kind of copse in the right part of the lane. Then, when one has found it, one hears a blackbird. The English resident birds are charming, and it is only a kind of ornithological snobbishness that leads men to believe that the songs of the foreign birds are better. Still, resident birds we have always with us. We applauded them in February, and compared with them, the willow-wren and the nightingale have just now something of the romantic fascination of the returned prodigal. Again and again I paused at the right kind of copse, and listened intently to hear a strange voice, if, indeed, a bird's voice would have been audible through the noise the cold deluge was making on the hood of the car. The trees looked dismal—oak and ash were leafless and birdless. The roadsides were for the season flowerless. Violets shone among the grass on the banks, and on the roadside cuckoo-flowers trembled in a wet wind that had silenced the cuckoos. Late blackthorns were in flower. It was nearer March than May everywhere but in the calendar. Yet time did not stand still. Hope fled as the afternoon passed, but time fled faster. One would have liked to hear even a chiffchaff before the day was over, but it was not to be. " To-morrow may be fine," we said. " We shall come back again to-morrow."

The weather-prophets were against us. They foretold a fall in the temperature, and certainly on the next morning the wind blew in a chill hurricane. Once more the wren and the chaffinch and the thrush and the blackbird sang above the weather, and the song of the farmyard cock was blown across the fields. But there was no shelter from the wind in hedge or tree, and, except for a willow-wren, the birds that had wintered in Africa were as silent as if they had been dead. Hours were spent in looking for them, in sitting still beside familiar bushes, in wandering at a walking-pace along green and lonely lanes. Three afternoons were fully occupied in the quest before a burst of song from a plantation outside Ditchling brought us to a halt. A nightingale was singing, but even then a motor-lorry came along and we had to move away so as not to cause an obstruction.

If, then, it takes three days—almost half a week, almost a hundredth part of a year—to hear one small bird singing for about one minute, and if during those three days time flies so fast that one scarcely seems to have risen till it is time to go to bed, how is it possible to find time for work without sacrificing much that makes life worth living? I find myself so busy at Brighton that I have not had time to hear Elizabeth Schumann or to see Gracie Fields or to go to Plumpton races or to visit the museum where stuffed birds may be seen in their natural surroundings. If the first morning had not been wet I should not even have had time to visit the Aquarium and watch the sea-horse sailing through the water with his magical propeller. Some people complain that they can find nothing to do. My chief complaint is that I cannot find enough time to do it in. If I had a fortune, and could live in this town with the civilised air, a day that lasted only twenty-four hours would seem far too short, even if I did nothing but sit in a deck-chair at the end of the pier. If I worked, it would not be in order to pass the time, but because the conscience of my ancestors pricked me. But I doubt if I should have time to work. Contrary to the common belief, time moves slowly in the cities and towns, but in country places and by the sea it flies faster than a swallow. Y. Y.

THE PRESENT POSITION IN BIOLOGY

THE attention of the general public is at present largely held by the physical sciences. The admirable books of Eddington and Jeans have made the modern developments in physics and astronomy almost as much common property as the innumerable practical applications of physics, such as wireless telephony, television and the like. In comparison with the beauty and comprehensiveness of the modern theories on the nature of matter, biology appears at first a scrap-heap of ill-assorted facts and theories. Many of the facts are, indeed, as entertaining and unexpected as the theories which only too frequently are hastily advanced to account for them. It is hardly surprising to find that biology is still considered fair game by the popular daily and Sunday newspapers, or that it is generally regarded as something cruder and much more backward than the exact sciences of physics, astronomy or chemistry.

But there are not wanting signs that the turn of biology is coming again. It was inevitable that the physical sciences, with their clearly defined objectives, the nature of matter and the laws governing its distribution in space, should progress at greater speed than biology, which is only to-day beginning to define its problems and coming to grips with them. Sir James Jeans, in *This Mysterious Universe*, has drawn attention to the infinitely minute fraction of the universe which alone can support life. He estimates it at a thousand million millionth part. Life can only exist in planets and, of their restricted number, only on those which are neither too near to nor too far from the suns around which the planets revolve, and from which they receive that continuous supply of radiant energy without which life would be impossible. Life, then, appears to have arisen from " dead " matter under certain physical conditions. It is but logical that its full elucidation should have to follow that of the nature of matter itself. To-day the physicists have advanced so far that they have passed from the world of " common sense " into that of pure mathematics. Exactly what adventures they will experience in these novel surroundings and when, if ever, they will emerge from them, only the future can tell. In the meantime, however, biology is beginning to make up a little leeway, it is correlating facts, establishing definite numerical relationships between events—in short, laying the foundations of an exact science.

Biology is faced with the great initial difficulty of defining its subject-matter. The history of biological thought reveals the presence of a fundamental discordancy which may be traced back to theology. René Descartes was educated by the Jesuits, who instilled into the mind of the ablest of their pupils their great doctrine of the freedom of the will, which they had defended with vigour against the attacks of Protestants and Jansenists alike. Thus it came about that the young philosopher, who taught the fundamental necessity of doubt and so became the father of modern scientific method, yet regarded the will as something apart. All other phenomena he believed to be subject to definite laws and capable of ultimate analysis, the will alone remained " free " and incapable of analysis. This Cartesian dualism, with its hard-and-fast distinction between mind and matter, has exercised a profound influence over biological thought.

Actually it was not until several generations after the death of Descartes that biologists in general became convinced that living matter was composed of material which could be produced by ordinary chemical processes in the laboratory. The distinction between " organic " and " inorganic " broken down for all time when Wöhler, in 1828, manufactured the organic substance urea from the inorganic ammonium cyanate. The vitalists of that generation consoled themselves with the belief that the " vital " processes of the living organism would never yield to investigation. But the doubters, in this case the physiologists, continued to investigate and analyse, and the vitalists of succeeding generations as continually yielded ground. Such intricate " vital " processes as muscular contraction or the transport of oxygen by the red hæmoglobin of the blood, have been revealed as the result of a series of chemical processes. They can all be expressed in terms of formulæ and equations, and are bound by the ordinary laws of chemistry and physics. It is only a question of time before all outstanding problems of this nature are solved.

But if that were all the distance that modern biology had taken us it would still have taken us no further than Descartes, albeit with scientific evidence that he lacked. Actually there is some reason for thinking that the mind is about to be analysed. The work of Pavloff, the great Russian physiologist, on conditioned responses in dogs and other animals has revolutionised our conception of the nature of mind, and shown that, in some of its aspects at any rate, it is controlled, as tyranically as is the world matter, by cause and effect. But the " freedom " of the will is not so easily destroyed. Just as the extreme mechanistics amongst the biologists are claiming that this freedom is for ever destroyed, the physicists announce that determination is non-existent and that all scientific laws are no more than statistical generalisations.

The freedom of the will may be left to exercise the brains of future generations. It is enough for this generation that the dualism between mind and matter has been undermined, and the way made open for a clearer understanding of the nature of life which is the subject matter of biology.

It has become plain that the fundamental difference between living and non-living matter lies not in the nature of the material of which they are composed nor in the chemical and physical processes which take place within them. Living matter is a most elaborate complex of bound energy, and it is the nature of the force or forces which control this, which keep the clock continually wound up, as it were, which is the basic problem of biology.

According to their attitude towards this problem, modern biologists can be divided into two groups. The mechanists consider that all the attributes of life will ultimately yield to analysis, and living matter be revealed as not essentially different from other forms of matter. They believe in the ultimate unity of all the sciences. Their opponents are a somewhat heterogenous company who have this in common, that they do not believe that any such analysis, however complete, can ever reveal the essential nature of life. They admit that life deals with ordinary matter and employs in its service the laws of chemistry and physics, yet they refuse to believe that the whole is the mere sum of the parts. When every part, and every process, has been fully described and explained, there will still, in their opinion, remain a residue unexplained. They believe that biology deals with something essentially different from the subject matter of the physical sciences, and that new concepts and new laws will be necessary for its understanding. They do not believe in the ultimate unity of the sciences.

It is noteworthy that to a large degree, though there are certain notable exceptions, the adherents of the mechanistic, analytical school of thought are the laboratory workers, physiologists in particular, who work on individual functions and seldom consider the animal as a whole. The opposing views are largely upheld by those whose work throws them into contact with the living animal, whether it be an insect, a bird, a mammal, or any of the varied forms of marine life. If the former school are in danger of never seeing the wood as a whole because of their too continuous examination of one or two particular trees, the latter are in an equal danger of losing themselves in contemplation of the beauty and extent of the wood and failing to take any note of the varied assortment of trees of which it is composed.

The sane view of modern biology takes cognisance of both schools of thought, and attempts to view the wood as a whole and also to examine the individual trees. It freely admits that the mechanistic point of view has led to most fruitful research, alike to the triumphs of modern physiology and to the mathematical exactness of modern heredity. It recognises that it is largely work inspired by this attitude which is furnishing biology with a basis of exact knowledge. At the same time it recognises that, although life works in terms of ordinary matter and of chemical processes which may be followed, and often repeated, in the laboratory, yet the nature of the controlling force which co-ordinates these multitudinous activities remains to be accounted for. The results of modern research, on tissue culture and experimental embryology especially, bear striking witness to the presence of innumerable interacting and controlling forces, in the absence of which the tissues of the body are not produced or, if already developed, lose their special structure and revert to an embryonic condition.

And so biologists stand to-day contemplating their mysterious subject matter. Some take the machine to pieces, others watch it at work and observe its relations to its surroundings and its fellows. Both groups are equally intent upon the solution of the most fascinating problem of which the mind of man can conceive. Each will, without doubt, play its essential part in the final solution of the problem, and we may most fittingly reserve our sympathy for those who shall come after this, and who can never realise the exhilaration of the search. C. M. Y.

"ALSO RAN"

I am greatly encouraged with the result at Ashton—
Sir Oswald Mosley

A by-election's a cheerful thing,
For to everybody it seems to bring
A deep content that is all their own.
As soon as the poll's result is known,
You may hear the shouts of the folk who win,
Half-crazed with joy that their man is " in ";
While the losers see nothing contradictory
In giving thanks for a " moral victory ";
And, under the multi-party plan,
I'm glad to notice the " also ran "
Deriving the liveliest satisfaction
From turning out to be no attraction.
How pleasant a thing it is to find
Defeat received with a thankful mind!
But the man at the bottom of the poll
Feels most elated and blithe of soul.
When the figures show that his intervention
(Whatever his party's first intention)
Has given the seat to the rival host
He ought, in logic, to hate the most.
It warms the hearts of the New Crusaders
To send to Parliament rank Free Traders,
By bravely splitting the Tory vote;
And the Ginger Group of the Left, I note,
Has caught the fever, and frankly glories
In downing Labour and helping Tories.
When the nation goes to the polls, no doubt
The wrecking parties will cancel out;
But that won't worry the happy man
Who can proudly boast that he " also ran "—
Content to canvass and spout and spend,
With no result at his labour's end
But to help a foeman and " dish " a friend.

MacFlecknoe.

Correspondence

THE LAND TAX AND THE COUNTRYSIDE

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—A short time ago some of us took part in a correspondence in the *Nation* on the subject of Land Taxation and Rural Amenities. Most of the letters and the editorial article took the view that, unless certain conditions were observed, a tax on land values would speed up the pace of road-ribboning and the destruction of natural beauty. The C.P.R.E. elsewhere expressed the same view. It would, unfortunately, appear that the proposals that are being presented to Parliament pay no regard to these considerations.

Agricultural land that has no other value is to be exempt. But (so far as we know at this moment) woodlands and playgrounds, unless municipally held, are to be subject to the new tax. And certainly agricultural land that has any further value as building land is to pay on that further value. No exemption, so far as we have learnt, is to be given to land beside roads and lanes; its owners will, therefore, be put under the pressure of the tax to sell it for building. "Ribboning," therefore, will receive a great impetus, as well as the sale of "beauty-spots" coveted by the jerry-builder. Moreover, the new tax has not been adjusted to the Town Planning schemes encouraged by the Government in another of its measures. In many places, moreover, there is no Town Planning scheme, for Town Planning has not been made universal and compulsory. In such places the new tax may have some very bad results indeed.

The present proposal is limited to a penny in the pound. But neither the Chancellor of the Exchequer as such, nor Socialists and Radicals as such, will be able to resist the temptation to raise it. So much is already confessed. If, therefore, we put the tax on the wrong lands now, the results must ultimately be disastrous.

There are many people all over the country who are preserving, as agricultural lands or woodlands, certain sites which they might sell for building; they are doing so for love of beauty and for love of their neighbours. These people are now to be penalised by taxation until the bungalow-builder and estate-breaker can have their way. If the State is going to use taxation as a means of forcing land into the market, it ought to decide what lands should in the public interest be built upon and what should not. The plea of advantage to the community in the preservation of a site as agricultural land or woodland ought in many cases to be admitted on the ground of amenity. If the State, by taxation, deprives the private owner of the ability to preserve land unbuilt upon, then the State ought in his stead to take the responsibility of making the decision on that point. But if the State will not save natural beauty itself it ought to leave private owners in a position to do so.

We are not opposed to the principle of taxing building-value—far from it. But Mr. Snowden's proposed tax seems to be based on an obsolete order of ideas. Most modern reformers consider that betterment levies should be the central feature of any scheme for the taxation of building-value; and we hope that it is not too late to satisfy Mr. Snowden's radicalism by stiffening up the Government's Town Planning measure, rather than by cutting across betterment levies with a flat tax on building-value, whether or not the owner is exploiting this value and whether or not the community desires him to do so.

We may all feel gratitude to the present Government for those things which it has done for amenities. The Prime Minister's appointment of the National Parks Committee, Mr. Lansbury's excellent Ancient Monuments Bill, the Town Planning Bill, and Mr. Snowden's proposal to exempt the lands of the National Trust from the land value tax, are evidence of such good will. It is to be hoped that Liberals also care about natural beauty, as well as about the taxation of land values. Unless their respective claims can be fairly adjusted, we are in danger of a great catastrophe to the weaker, but not the least precious, of these two causes.—Yours, etc.,

G. M. TREVELYAN.
J. M. KEYNES.

THE JURY SYSTEM

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—While agreeing almost wholly with the writer of your article last week, "An Alarming Verdict," there are three points which, to my mind, he might well have enlarged upon.

First, in felonies each juror is sworn to give "a true verdict . . . *according to the evidence*," so that the real loophole in our criminal legal system occurs whenever it is a question of the admissibility of evidence for the prosecution. The law here is that the Crown may only refer to previous or subsequent conduct, or to previous criminal convictions, to clarify "an issue actually before the jury," to prove guilty intent in the actual offence, to rebut a defence of good character, and to explain actual facts. Every such reference must be, within the judge's ruling, pertinent to the actual felony whereof the prisoner stands indicted.

Secondly, there is, as Lord Darling pointed out on April 29th in the Lords, no need of any "reforms" such as the writer of your article desiderates, with regard to publicity in the preliminary examination. The place of a justice's examination is not to be deemed "an open Court," and he already has power to exclude any person he thinks should be so dealt with (Indictable Offences Act, 1848, s. 19). One is inclined, therefore, to side with Lord Darling against the Lord Chancellor, and to demand an extended and more perspicuous use of their existent powers by examining justices. This is surely preferable to the invocation of charges under that tenuous title, "Criminal Contempt of Court," once the fat is in the fire, and jurors' minds are titivated by premature publicity. Lord Rothermere's unsolicited testimony in his letter to Lord Darling is in this connection both opportune and significant of the popular press attitude. It is the trial that concerns the public. Crime is not prevented by publicity accorded to justices' examinations. Probably only "*Habeas Corpus*," "unreasonable bail," and "Vexatious Indictments" concern the public interest in such preliminary proceedings.

Finally, there remain *certiorari* and Appeal. The former ought to be more favourably considered by the Attorney-General in cases where "a fair and impartial trial of the case cannot be had in the Court below." Hitherto it has been frowned on, and hardly ever invoked by the defence, in murder cases. It is certainly a condition making for fairer administration of justice under a jury system. And in regard to Appeal, there is no excuse for declining to review evidence where the Assize Judge makes comments which seem quite opposed to the final verdict. "Miscarriage of justice" is actually exemplified in Archbold as "where the jury have taken into consideration matters which they ought not to have."

The Achilles heel of the English criminal legal system has always been the jury system; it is a *pis aller*. Recent cases have demonstrated certain grave shortcomings in its functioning. As Lord Darling very sympathetically observed, jurors are but human. But we are now forced to admit that they can, and do, impair that degree of objectivity which is universally aimed at, but most nearly approached in the administration of English criminal law. *Delendi sunt.*—Yours, etc.,

7 Catherine Street,
S.W. 1.

D. GRAHAM HUTTON.

[Other letters commenting on the same article, but dealing with the facts of the Wallace case, are unavoidably held over since an appeal is now pending.—ED. *N. S. and N.*]

PUBLIC CONTROL AND THE POST OFFICE

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—In your excellent leading article on "Public Control" you rightly pointed out that "hardly any Socialist wishes nowadays to nationalise any industry in quite the old way, by bringing it under the direct control of a Government Department after the fashion of the Post Office or the Admiralty Dockyards or the building department of the Office of Works. It is recognised that neither Parliament nor the Cabinet can tackle the problem of day-to-day control of our vital industries in addition to their existing preoccupations." In the same issue, in the comments on the affairs of the week, you remark on the niggardliness of the amount allowed to the Post Office for telephone developments: "The Post Office has for many years adopted an ultra-conservative policy in regard to the provision of new telephone equipment. . . . This stickiness, where there is undoubtedly a strong case for a more forward policy, is very hard to explain."

Putting the two quotations together, the inference is obvious. The stickiness in Post Office developments is not hard to explain, when we consider that expansion schemes depend on current State revenue. By transforming the Post Office into a Public Service Corporation, with the State as chief shareholder, the difficulty of shortage of capital for investment in development could be overcome. It would then be possible to issue a large debenture loan, subscribed through the usual channels. This ought to satisfy Treasury orthodoxy, which believes in the virtues of capitalisation by free enterprise. It ought also to satisfy those members of the Liberal Party and others who want to float large development loans. By freeing the Post Office from direct ministerial control in this manner, its administrators would be free to develop that independent initiative which is the best characteristic of private enterprise. Control of charges to the public could be exercised by a Ministry of Public Industries, which could also control other Public Service Corporations by the methods exercised by the Railway Rates Tribunal in this country and the Inter-State Commerce Commission in America, but with greater powers of interference when necessary. A standard revenue could be guaranteed to the State, and also any further profits which might accrue.

Future users of telephones ought to bear some part of the cost of their developments. The interest charge on the debenture issue is justified on the same grounds as the interest paid by a municipality on a waterworks loan. As you said, "It is no less socialistic to borrow money for the Central Electricity Board than to borrow it for Hull or Manchester." The Socialistic element of the scheme outlined here is not likely to worry those who are constantly impugning the Post Office as an example of what we are likely to suffer under Socialism.

The method suggested has extensive possibilities. The nationalisation of all the railways in this country and also of road passenger transport might take place on similar lines. Road development schemes might also be handed over to a Bridges and Highways Corporation, which could float loans for road development just as in America new roads are capitalised by Highway Bonds.

As we are now in the trough of a world depression, and as emergence from it, though promised by Mr. Snowden in his Budget speech, must inevitably be slow, some of the developments which are suggested here could most opportunely take place in the very near future.—Yours, etc.,

NATURA NON FACIT SALTUM.

THE BUDGET

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—While some of the criticisms of the Budget in your leading article of this week have much force, there seem to me to be two underlying contradictions in it that might be pointed out.

(1) You start by criticising the financial soundness of the Budget, and end up by deploring the fact that "the traditional policy of the Treasury is still supreme." Surely you cannot have it both ways! Now, by all the traditional canons the Budget is a bad one, because in effect no revenue will be applied to debt reduction (to my mind a perfectly sound procedure in times of depression). Mr. Snowden, however, has by his devious methods, tried to bluff the city into a conversion scheme (as is made admirably clear by "Toreador"), and looks like pulling it through. Last year the Treasury and the Bank of England hoped to bring down long term interest rates by encouraging lower open market rates (by the funding of floating debt, etc.), but the gilt-edged boomlet collapsed because of pressure on sterling. This policy has fortunately been reversed this year, and the policy of high till rates has been adopted instead. This change seems to me to be of fundamental importance.

(2) You lament the fact that there is no attack on the rentier, but fail to see what a very big blow to him a conversion scheme would be. If Mr. Snowden carries out a scheme similar to the one outlined by "Toreador," he will not only free the State from an annual tribute of £20 millions to the rentier, but will make it easier for industry to borrow at reasonable rates. The present struggle between wage-earner and rentier will, to a very large extent, be decided by the trend of long term rates of interest.

While therefore we may deplore the general inaction of the Government during the past year, there is surely much to be said for continuing this "conversion policy," now that it has gone so far.—Yours, etc.,

26 Great Ormond Street,
W.C. 1.

E. A. RADICE.

"PRISON FOR THE POOR"

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—The judicial statistics for 1929 to which I referred in my original article afford ample corroboration of the fact stressed by "Solicitor" in his letter in your last issue, that the system of judgment summons and committal order is very effective in compelling poor debtors to pay their debts. There were over 11,000 committal orders signed in that year, and in all these cases the debtors paid, except the 3,500 odd who were put into prison. (I have no doubt myself that the system would be equally effective among the aristocracy and the middle classes.) County court bailiffs are moved by the creditors on failure of the instalments to present the warrant of arrest at the homes of the debtors, often on Saturday night, and, if no cash is available, frantic efforts are then made to borrow the money from their neighbours or their relations or their friends so as to keep outside the prison walls. This is what Sir Edward Parry and others (including myself) call the "screw" system.

I am challenged by your correspondent to suggest an alternative method of enforcing judgments. I am in favour, frankly, of completely abolishing the system of judgment summons and committal orders. The Debtors Act of 1869 abolished imprisonment for debt for all sections of society, except debtors who are sued in the county court, and that in practice means the working classes. One alternative which "Solicitor" can find lies in countries as advanced as ourselves in social legislation. Germany, for instance, is a country where our system of committal orders or imprisonment for debt is unknown. And France also—I hasten to add this in case it may be argued that it was imprisonment for debt which won us the Great War.—Yours, etc.,

THE WRITER OF *Prison for the Poor.*

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—It should be made clear that imprisonment for debt is far more widespread than might be gathered from your article, or from the subsequent correspondence. When your contributor refers to 3,484 debtors who were committed to prison in 1929, he treats of the problem as it arises from the operation of the ordinary County Court judgment summons. This is only one of the ways in which debtors go to prison. In 1928 (the latest year for which I have figures) the total of imprisoned debtors was 13,483, of which only 3,448 came from County Courts; the rest were committed under wife maintenance or affiliation orders, or for non-payment of rates and taxes. In other words, about a quarter of the prison population in 1928 was there for debts of various kinds.

In dealing with imprisonment for debt, there is a tendency to restrict criticism to the County Court aspect, but this simplification of the subject is neither useful nor logical. The whole matter was dealt with in an article in THE NEW STATESMAN of November 2nd, 1929.—Yours, etc.,

HECTOR A. MUNRO.

35 Grosvenor Road, Birkenhead.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Supplementary to the common-sense view of "Solicitor," may one ask the writer of "Prison for the Poor" what he would do with another class of defaulters, *viz.*, those who neglect to pay rates and/or income tax? He says "No civilised State should impose the punishment for criminals upon respectable citizens who neglect civil obligations. If it does so it should at least make it a part of its criminal code." Would he make this sort of neglect a crime? If not would he confer upon a class of civically conscienceless folk what one is sure they would regard as a quite delightful freedom?

Some experience upon a Petty Sessional bench leads me to raise this point as one of some social importance.—Yours, etc.,

Hemel Hempstead.

JESSE HAWKES.

THIS SUNDAY BUSINESS

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I have read with interest the article with the above title signed "Y. Y." in your issue of the 25th ult. The arguments adduced by your contributor with the object of refuting the argument of Mr. Morrison in attacking the Sunday Performances (Regulation) Bill appear to me to be wrong and beside the point. I heard Mr. Morrison at the Central Hall, and thought his argument in favour of basing our action with regard to this Bill on the foundation of the Ten Commandments as the most telling and convincing part of his speech. I know of no better foundation on which to build the laws of this country. It is not always easy to carry this out, but at least we can strive to do so. Your contributor states that the State "should do all in its power to create conditions that are favourable to virtue." I agree with this, but not with the quibble following about supporting the "suppression of crime" but not the "suppression of sin."

Your contributor further states that "up to a point, of course, the State is the guardian of morality." Where does the State derive its ideas of morality or what better source is there than the Ten Commandments? If the source is admitted then it is a question of getting as near as possible to the carrying out of these Commandments if we wish to "create conditions that are favourable to virtue." It is because I do not believe this Bill if passed will help to create conditions that are favourable to virtue that I am opposed to it.—Yours, etc.,

D. M. MASON.

34 Queen's Gate Gardens, S.W. 7.

WAR AND THE NEXT GENERATION

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Mr. Arnold Freeman's plea for a more international outlook in our schools is most timely. Before the Education Bill becomes law the whole question should be examined by an expert committee.

I have in some quarters heard the suggestion that such a matter needs a course to itself, and that there is no time in the syllabus for it. This view I hold to be entirely wrong. Any such special course or subject would create a world-sense in the mind of the pupil which would greatly quicken his interest in history, geography, foreign languages, etc., with a probable saving of time in those subjects. Let me give an illustration with the application of which I am familiar—the inclusion of Esperanto in the school curriculum. I am not sure whether it is the best example possible, since the main reason for the adoption of Esperanto in schools is to help the study of foreign languages, but it will serve.

Mr. J. T. Harrod, Headmaster of Sibford School, Banbury, says:

> Then comes a realisation that Esperanto can be used for foreign correspondence. If opportunity for doing this is afforded, an intense international interest is evolved, geography becomes more real, and a world-sense appears prominent in the child mind.

A definite aiming at an international outlook in one subject would have beneficial effects, not on the mind of the pupil only, but also on his work as a whole, thus making up for any time lost in teaching the additional subject.—Yours, etc.,

3 Malham Road, Forest Hill, S.E. 23. J. P. O'CONOR.

MARGARET McMILLAN

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I have been entrusted with the task of writing a record of the life and work of the late Margaret McMillan. It will assist materially if any of your readers will send to me any important letters, papers or pamphlets they may possess.

Personal memories would be most helpful. All documents will be returned in due course.—Yours, etc., ALBERT MANSBRIDGE.

38 High Oaks Road, Welwyn Garden City.

HANGING

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—As one who has sometimes had charge of prisoners, I wish to support M. E. Durham's protest against the cruelty of sentimentalists who approve of imprisonment for life but are against a painless exit by an "early door." How many blundering suicides, men and women incurably diseased or whose lives are wretched, must envy the murderer's release?

Death is inevitable, and generally it is a lingering death; in this respect the murderer has nothing to complain of. The thousands who endured in war the suspense of waiting for a practically inevitable and painful death or mutilation know that the suffering of awaiting execution may be educative; but the numb hopelessness of lifelong captivity is not educative, but demoralising. Deprived of all creative, emotional and sex outlets, the "life" prisoner inevitably degenerates.

Every living thing fights to the death against prolonged captivity, instinctively aware that loss of liberty gradually destroys the soul—an injury no executioner can accomplish. Gaolers, even the best (do many really well-intentioned men volunteer to be gaolers?), are compelled by force of circumstances to continually threaten and bully their helpless charges, grown stupid, resentful and obstinate by the soulless routine of prison life. Why do many prisoners try to commit suicide if it is not that the torture of long imprisonment is a far more vindictive and dreadful punishment than the "early door"? It is towards making imprisonment more humane and educative, and not against the death penalty, that we should strive.—Yours, etc., ARTHUR OSBURN (Lt.-Col.).

Villefranche-sur-Mer, France.

INCOME TAX

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—In your issue of April 25th you favour "some independent check on the activities of a tax-collecting bureaucracy," and suggest that "a possible remedy would be to transfer to County Courts limited powers of adjudication and review." It is not clear whether you have in mind an appellate body for the purpose of deciding when and in how many instalments the hard-up taxpayer should pay his tax, or whether your suggestion is that the appellate body should adjudicate upon disputed assessments. If the latter, I would point out that there is already a tribunal in existence for the hearing of appeals against assessments—namely, the General Commissioners of Income Tax, who are usually the local magistrates. Neither the Board of Inland Revenue nor the Royal Commission on the Income Tax have proposed any interference with the appellate functions of the General Commissioners.

But possibly your suggestion is that the County Courts should decide when the taxpayer should pay his tax. Under this system we should all be queueing up at the County Courts and pleading postponement indefinitely on the ground of "inconvenience" (*vide* the *Times*, April 23rd). Provision exists at the present time for reasonable latitude in cases of genuine hardship. There are, however, great inequalities as between different areas. The locally appointed Collector in one district may make concessions which may be refused by the Collector in another. This is one argument—and a not unimportant one—in favour of central appointment and control of the Collectors by the Board of Inland Revenue.

It is a curious commentary on the hysterical campaign of Lord Decies and others that one-quarter of the Collectors are already appointed by the Board of Inland Revenue, and have been for many years. How many taxpayers know whether their particular Collector is a Board's Collector or a Commissioners' Collector? Not many, I wager. There is not a jot or tittle of evidence to show that the administration is harsher in areas where the Collector is appointed by the Board. The establishment of the whole of the Collectors and their direct appointment by the Board of Inland Revenue is a highly desirable and long overdue piece of rationalisation.—Yours, etc.,

A. J. BROWN

7 St. George's Square, (Editor of *Taxes*).
Westminster, S.W. 1.

THE SENTIMENTAL BURGLAR

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I have just received anonymously through the post a very old locket which was stolen from my house the other day by burglars. It was originally the property of my great-great-great-grandmother Anne, Countess of Kellie, and naturally I was delighted to get it back.

I found myself wondering what type of man this sentimental burglar of mine could be that he should be so moved by the unlawful possession of a family heirloom as to return it to the owner. Is there a new kind of burglar about against whom hotel proprietors like myself must take precautions, or is it just our old professional turned sentimental?—Yours, etc.,

JAMES M. ERSKINE.

Eccleston Hotel, Eccleston Square, S.W. 1.

THE TARIFF ISSUE

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—If Sir Leo Chiozza Money invites my opinion on the question whether he should be permitted to knit stockings to fit the 46,000,000 pairs of legs of the inhabitants of these islands, I can certainly give it to him. The answer is, most decidedly, Yes. Whether other people should be prevented from buying anything but what he knits is, however, another question. And here, in my judgment, the answer is, most decidedly, No.—Yours, etc., LIONEL ROBBINS.

Miscellany

COMPOSERS AND CRITICS

By ETHEL SMYTH

COMMENTING in this article on one of the same name by Mr. Turner (in your issue of April 18th), I should like to begin by pointing out a fact which I think musical critics and their readers overlook: namely, that he who damns contemporary creative music shoulders a grave responsibility. Books, pictures can be studied first hand by anyone; even a play can look to a run during which early impressions may be reversed. But consider the case of a new large-scale choral composition. Even if it is printed, how many people are capable of playing and judging a work it has taken a conductor and his chorus months to prepare, on the publishing and launching of which vast sums have been spent, and which hasty and unfair criticism may drive off the field for years?

Again, if worth anything, music is individual, and here let me once more quote a profound remark of Sir Fitzjames Stephen: "Originality," he says, "does not consist in saying what no one has said before, *but in saying exactly what you think yourself*." Now originality is always disconcerting, for which reason the first judgments of a serious musician, who also has possible executive shortcomings in mind, will probably be tentative. But critics are paid to hand in that very night hasty impressions that the public takes for a considered expert verdict; which is why Brahms classed musical criticism among the "dishonest trades."

A critic overwhelmed by admiration may, I think, proclaim his faith. To appreciate demands far rarer qualities than to pick holes; and if on further hearing the glamour of the work dwindles, what harm is done, even to the critic himself? Who remembers what a man said six months ago? But it is monstrous that a work, the great merit of which is, perhaps, that it comes from the deep places of the soul and needs some knowing, may be sneered, *pro tem*, out of existence by unfortunates on whom harsh circumstance has imposed a career in which, as Mr. Turner himself remarks, "enthusiasm for the rare and first rate" ebbs, and a tendency "to overpraise the clever, imitative, essentially commonplace" is a habit.

And now for my main contention, which, greatly as it may shock the Faculty, is, I know, sound.

What would you say if the reporter of a recently held "one shot archery competition" criticised Mrs. So and So's type of bow, her stance, her style generally, but omitted to mention that she scored a perfect centre? Yet such is the custom of musical critics, who consider public applause wholly unimportant. On the last page of his *Missa Solemnis* Beethoven wrote: "It came from the heart; *may it reach other hearts*"; and I aver that the response of a serious audience to a new serious work is an art event of very first importance. The fact that a paragraph which would be powerless to kill a book or paint out a picture can, as I said, silence music for decades is bad enough, and should, one imagines, make men chary of lightly uttering harsh judgments; but in no case are they entitled to hush up the fact that on a given occasion 2,000 people apparently disagreed with their slighting verdict.

This is the sort of thing I should like to see in the paper next day:

UNQUALIFIED SUCCESS OF H. JONES'S "SHEEP-PEN."

"This futile work, which kindled the rapturous enthusiasm of a large but undiscriminating audience," etc. And, after the composer had been duly flattened out, should be added (if it was so): "Even the orchestra and chorus, responsible musicians one would have thought, swelled the hubbub! Alas for English music!"

Of all professions that of musical critic must be the most deadening, and the sophisticated are ever apt on the journey towards culture and omniscience to drop the simple emotions of those "common people" who heard Christ gladly. Yet on these emotions does great art, in my opinion, primarily depend. Let me be frank. The opinions of experts, as quoted by Mr. Turner, on *The Prison* are of very great value to me. But knowing, as I can but know, that my name is *not* Ethel Dell Smyth, what I value above all else is the response of the blessedly untheoretical crowd. Of course, they can be caught by cheapness, by sentimentality; but there are other roads to their hearts, and one of these happens to be the road I have tried to walk on all my life. . . .

Now Mr. Turner has been good enough to lift from *Time and Tide* (which is for *fairplay* rather than for *feminism*) passages from letters received by me after *The Prison*. Two concert-room experiences of a "sheep-pen" nature, and a Scotch press of generous warmth and insight, had shown me that I and my friend Brewster had not wrought in vain.* But what most effectively soothed soreness at the reported frigidity—or worse—of the English press were these wonderful tributes of strangers and listeners-in from all centres tapped by the Regional wave.

To people like Vaughan Williams, Holst, Bax, or Bliss—all of them men I admire, and whose friendliness I value—the press can matter but little. A school of British composers there must be, and a new work of theirs goes the round as inevitably as a train on the Inner Circle. But look at my case. As writer of books, conductor, etcetera, one is "well known," and innocents frequently write: "I am ashamed to say I know none of your music." How should they? Take the past three years, for instance. You may ransack the records of the Three Choirs, Leeds, Norwich Festivals, of the L.S.O., Philharmonic, Courtauld, Hallé, New Symphony, B.B.C. Symphony, and all big provincial concerts; but for my name you will look in vain. Except *short* items at the Proms., anything that does happen is the result of personal appeals to friendly potentates whom one increasingly shrinks from bothering. Cut off from every source of gain—royalties on performances, records, etc.—one's orchestral works, of course, in MS. only—when asked to subscribe to musical charities I often say to myself: "If they only knew!" But they don't know; not even the potentates realise the truth.†

Now where does the public come in? What can they do more than testify in the concert hall, or, thanks to that blessed institution broadcasting, marvellously take the trouble to write one adorable letters? Without a leader the public could not organise itself even against war or the income-tax. The other day, when a great surgeon and listener-in, learning the facts of my case, asked me if none would stand up against what seemed to him a silent conspiracy ("No," I interjected, "it is not that")—anyhow, a colossal injustice—I had to answer, "None." . . .

As for Mr. Turner's contention that unfair treatment raises up defenders, I reply, "not if you are outside the Inner Circle." Let a man of independent judgment attack one who has arrived, and, as we have recently seen, protest becomes clamant at once; "*On court volontiers au secours*

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* Mr. Turner's Brewster quotation in a former article is, of course, a most amusing howler. If anyone dubbed himself "the song, *the bird*, the pride, the home" few would set his words to music, I fancy!

† I see *The Wreckers* is down for the Philharmonic Charity Concert on May 15th. I have taken four tickets.

de la force," as the French put it. But boycotting is not attack; it is something far deadlier. Why, even a friendly potentate cannot prise open year after year the jaws of some fifty urban and provincial committees and conductors and force a black draught labelled E. S. down their throats. Except for a brief period before the war, the reluctance to swallow that draught has always been fostered by the press, who, I think, with very few exceptions, honestly dislike my music. Only it is rather hard luck that the dual working of the machine—critics and concert promoters—should debar one from getting at the people, who seemingly do like it; that is the public. The vain hopes, the unfulfilled promises this very year—Leeds, Gloucester . . . ! But enough; down with the curtain.

What checks bitterness is a certain comprehension of England and her instinct for Closed Corporations. One knows, too, that competition is fierce, and that in giving an outsider's music conductors cut no ice. Still, *The Prison* is probably the coping stone of a long life devoted to art; and I think the press was in honour bound even to *dwell* upon what happened at Queen's Hall when the *Last Post* died away, if only because some greatly daring conductor might then have said to his (provincial) committee: " Another audience bowled over! . . . *I mean to give this work!* "

Perhaps, who knows, he will yet say it! Meanwhile, may I remind critics who look on the taste of the public as negligible, that Dr. Johnson and Goethe were of an opposite opinion.

DAWN AT BURLINGTON HOUSE

THE visitor to this year's Royal Academy must feel like Dr. Watson arriving late at Baker Street. He catches the echo of the President's modest yet triumphant " Elementary! " and perhaps even glimpses him, like his two great exemplars, Holmes and Ingres, reaching for his violin. But he has missed the dramas themselves, which have now made Burlington House famous in the annals of detection. For the peeling of their masks of paint from the photographs there was, it must be admitted, the precedent of Holmes's adventure with the half-caste child. Yet none can withhold tribute from the masterly handling of the case of the historical picture, which was too closely related to an illustration from *Treasure Island*, or the episode of the still-life turned upside down. The visitor's one regret will be that, the *corpora delicti* having been removed, it is a dull Academy which remains.

If most of the canvases, however, are not particularly interesting, the principle of their selection is little less than sensational. The hanging committee is to be congratulated on having unobtrusively effected a revolution. There has been a clean sweep of nearly all those pictures which have for years made the Academy a byword of anachronism, and led to the accusation that an unfair advantage, or a monopoly, was being used to bolster up a worthless kind of painting. It is an old enough complaint. Hazlitt made it over a hundred years ago—" A Royal Academy is a kind of hospital or infirmary for the obliquities of taste and ingenuity—a receptacle where enthusiasm and originality stop and stagnate, and spread their influence no farther, instead of being a school founded for genius, or a temple built to fame. The generality of those who wriggle, or fawn, or beg their way to a seat there, live on their certificate of merit to a good old age, and are seldom heard of afterwards." At last we have a year when Hazlitt's reproach shows signs of losing its point.

Gone are the historical pictures, the pirates, cavaliers, Bonny Prince Charlies and other relics of an outworn taste. There are still left two polar bears, and a tiger engaged in a conflict with a serpent, but nearly all the old dramas of natural history have been banished. The namby-pamby subject-picture is no more, and with it is the meaningless and usually vugar problem-piece. These kinds of picture, which depended on the appeal of their hackneyed themes to escape the condemnation of consistently poor painting, have paid the penalty at last. And for each diehard who wipes away a tear in memory of absent friends, innumerable voices will be raised to salute a new era.

Unfortunately, the Academic processes are so clothed in mystery that, while the exclusions must command all enlightened praise, the inclusions will hardly awake the same enthusiasm. As they had no reason to anticipate a change of policy, the bulk of young modern painters in this country naturally refrained from sending in their work. Although the hanging committee has done its best with what came into its hands, one's impression of the exhibition as a whole is the same as that which Mrs. Tibbs made on Goldsmith—" at once a slattern and a coquette; much emaciated, but still carrying the remains of beauty." Excepting the deadweight of automatic painting sent in by the Old Guard of R.A.s. and A.R.A.s, which enters unchallenged, and a curious foisoning of golden-haired tots, we are given something very like an overgrown New English Art Club show, rather below the average.

Most of the subject-pictures admitted are of the classical-biblical-nightgown tradition, which that institution still favours as a lethargic homage to pre-Raphaelitism. In the New English style, too, are many of the landscapes whose genealogy might be traced back to the Norwich school, but which to-day are imitations in the third or fourth generation. This is polite, accomplished painting, only a few decades away from the contemporary movement, and will no doubt form the new Academic basis. At least the clock has moved. But like all corporate bodies, the Academy keeps alive by its individuals rather than its mass. A school is only useful as a point of departure, and while the present exhibition is laudable as a step forward all round, the pictures worth looking at are by those who have taken more than a step, and gone on their way alone.

Mr. John's *Lord D'Abernon* is beyond all question the picture of the year; down to the spraying plumes of the court hat it is vital and magnificent. His *William Butler Yeats* really convinces us of the poet, and his *Brenda* is charming. It is, in fact, his Academy this year. Mr. Sickert's *Mrs. Robert van Buren Emmons and Child* arrests by its uncompromising realism and engages by its virtuosity. Sir John Lavery's *Lord Lonsdale*, with its brave glitter of red and gold, is carried by its fine impetuosity well beyond an exercise in the grand manner, and is the best thing he has done for some years. Sir William Orpen, who has never allowed the Academy to shackle him, is justified in the courage of his *Palm Sunday*. Mr. Keith Henderson's *The Word* is a witty version of the old problem-picture, and a piece of fine, straightforward painting. The work of the late Mr. G. W. Lambert shows an academic tradition quickened by enlightenment and independence. And this same quality, lifting their work above the rut, and intelligently basing it on what is best of the past, yet keeping it contemporary and alive, illuminates the canvases of Messrs. Rushbury, Harold Knight, Henry Bishop, and Colin Gill. Misses Mann and Joseph, and Messrs. Nelson, Kirby and Grimm are among the most successful *fauves* of the year; though it is to be regretted that the epithet is still a little indecorous for the year's offering.

That there will be real *fauves* at Burlington House remains a pious hope. At the Academy banquet, the Royal speech and that of the Home Secretary both judiciously urged the claims of modern art. The President gave no responsive hint as to future policy, but this year's gesture is one from which it will be peculiarly difficult to revert, and there is some reason for looking forward to an Academy which will exchange rheumatics for growing pains.

T. W. EARP.

NAMAQUALAND AFTER RAIN

AGAIN the veld revives
Imbued with lyric rains,
And sap re-sweetening dry stalks
Perfumes the quickening plains;

Small roots explode in strings of stars,
Each bulb gives up its dream,
Honey drips from orchid throats,
Jewels each raceme;

The desert sighs at dawn——
As in another hemisphere
The temple lotus breaks her buds
On the attentive air——

A frou-frou of new flowers,
Puff of unruffling petals,
While rods of sunlight strike pure streams
From rocks beveined with metals;

Far in the gaunt karroo
That winter dearth denudes
Ironstone caves give back the burr
Of lambs in multitudes;

Grass waves again where drought
Bleached every upland kraal;
A peach tree shoots along the wind
Pink volleys through a broken wall;

And willows growing round the dam
May now be seen
With all their traceries of twigs
Just hesitating to be green,

Soon to be hung with colonies
All swaying with the leaves
Of pendent wicker love-nests
The pretty loxia weaves.

WILLIAM PLOMER.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

The Threepenny Opera

The chief feature of the Film Society's programme on Sunday at the Tivoli was Pabst's *Der Drei Groschen-Oper* (The Threepenny Opera). This new German sound film is a free adaptation of the story of *The Beggar's Opera*, the period being late nineteenth century, and the setting a sort of Soho-dockland, where Mackie Messer (Macheath) rules the apaches and Peachum is king of the beggars. There is nothing of Gay in the piece, which has rather the macabre sentiment of a waxworks show lightened by touches of *The Funeral of a Marionette*. A rather sombre picturesqueness pervades the film. Most of the scenes are at night or indoors, along huge wharves and in wine-vaults and underground cafés. The setting is superb, and the characters are part of it. Pabst's genius for realistic detail gives the whole thing an impressive original atmosphere of its own. The brothel, with its plush seats, bronze statues and lace, where the police almost capture Messer, and Peachum's house of grotesques and fake beggars are hard to forget. The film suffers from being episodic and too long, but acting, singing and photography are all so good that one is content to let the story go. Only the apaches, I thought, affected too much the bluff and beery unanimity of the old operatic chorus.

Mr. Menjou in the News

The Front Page, at the Tivoli, is an extremely good film, in fact, it provides more genuine excitement than almost anything that has ever come out of Holywood. The story extends over one evening, and is confined almost to one place, the " Press Room " attached to a State prison in which a man is going for electioneering purposes to be electrocuted in the morning. Half the film consists of six or seven press men, shouting simultaneously down telephones at one hundred miles an hour in their almost unintelligible jargon. The photography and the acting are taken at tremendous speed, and all the hysterical strident ugliness of America lives before us. For the film is quite unsentimental, and leaves on the disgusted onlooker a terrible impression of reality. The only decent people in the story are the murderer, called for political purposes a Bolshevik, and a woman of the streets who endeavours to shelter him. In addition to the journalists, we are presented to the managing editor of the *Morning Post*, in the person of Adolphe Menjou, the brain behind the politico-journalistic intrigue, a man with a quite disinterested passion for sensational headlines, intrigue and power. It is a tribute to the consummate powers of this great actor that he appears with complete success in a kind of part that he has never before attempted, and in which it is more worth while to triumph. Incidentally, his mastery of the English language is now perfect. The whole play was brilliantly directed; the speed never flagged for a single instant. The correlation between the sordid sets and the sordid material of the melodrama was perfectly realised, while the film gained immensely in solidity from an almost complete observance of the classical niceties. I think this is about the only occasion on which I have been genuinely excited by a thriller on the screen. The production and the acting are every bit as good as in a William Powell picture, and the material far more exciting and convincing. *The Front Page* will give an hour and a half of first-class entertainment even to those who, as a rule, eschew the films. And how is this effect gained? By constructing for once a film that is acrid, truthful and unsentimental, a film of which the underlying taste is not syrup, but alcohol. If *The Front Page* has the success that appears probable, credit must go to the audience as well as to the actors and the director.

Angna Enters

Had Miss Enters been the sixth child in an early Victorian family, living in a rambling country rectory, her passion for dressing up would have been satisfied in early life by an " acting-box," on wet afternoons, and a host of willing co-operators. In this way she might have developed her talents, instead of bringing us, as she did on Sunday night, but one, well-wrapped in a napkin: an amazing gift of pageantry. But even the most pageant-hungry is surfeited by two hours' rich feeding, and Miss Enters' performance is a trifle long. A sinister sensuality pervades all her best compositions—in *Webs and Narcissism*, where she is a modern young woman, this is the dominant impression. In her period pieces, however, more than sensuality peeps out of the napkin. The whole colouring and conception of *Moyen age* is exquisite; here she moves only her head and arms, which are lovely, and succeeds in giving us by these movements the whole tortured misery of Hugo's *Notre Dame.*

The caricature in *Piano Lesson, Contre danse,* and *Field Day* might do credit to a Women's Institute, but it is surely too crude to satisfy anyone so ambitious as Miss Enters. The Victorian scene is perfect in *Picnic,* where we are shown a delicious honeymoon couple of the early 'sixties, taking an *al fresco* meal and fishing the while. All the dominance of the male, and the futile preoccupations of women characteristic of that age, are suggested. The husband sleeps, whilst his lady tries to find mischief for her restless hands. He is woken to kill the grayling, which causes her elegant *frissons* of horror. This young couple must have lived at Bedford in the heyday of its glory, and are here spending a happy day on the canal. Here is art, and when Miss Enters can give us this, why must she spend such an unconscionable time playing to the gallery?

"Payment Deferred"

Now that the old, old story of "Who did it? or, Spot the Villain" has become so out of date, the search for something different leads to curious sources for inspiration; as it has led the authors of the new play at the St. James's Theatre (by Jeffrey Dell, from the novel by C. S. Forester). There is a little poison, a little psychology, a good deal of conventional characterisation and a general setting in one of those "different" suburban drawing-rooms. Different in this case because there is never any doubt that William Marble did in fact murder his rich young relative from Australia in the first act, and because that sort of thing ought not to happen at 53 Malcolm Road Dulwich. William Marble may be a mixture of Macbeth and Charley Peace, but in result he is more like C. K. Munro's Mr. Eno, with the addition of some backbone. He is prompted to action not by dreaming of the power of gold, but simply by penury, and by adopting murder to keep the wolf from the door he lets in a great many white elephants which all tread on his toes: Louis Quinze tables, "The Monarch of the Glen," a daughter grown too big for her suburban boots, and Madame Collins from the dressmaker's shop at the corner. Mr. Charles Laughton is a master of expressive action. He unifies and galvanises Marble's attributes into a complete character. When he walks across the room or strokes his chin such actions are no mere mannerisms, they are not only appropriate, but inevitable; and he never repeats himself.

"London Wall" at the Duke of York's

The scene of Mr. Van Druten's new play is a solicitor's office, and the material is provided by the life of the staff, four stenographers, an articled clerk, and an office-boy. The author gives the impression of selecting what he reveals of his characters from a mass of information he possesses about them, and he has a prodigious gift for filling his dialogue with the phrases exactly appropriate to the individual speaker. The pathos and absurdity of adolescence, once again, and the pathos of middle-class poverty provide his subject, and this play, as *Young Woodley,* is full of sentiment but manages just to avoid sentimentality. The play suffers from a certain absence of focus: the comedy of the young lovers slightly overshadows the more significant tragedy of the deserted woman. But her interest in their happiness at the height of her own misery is a beautiful example of Mr. Van Druten's pathos. No one would wish him to write plays with a thesis, but I think his fault as a playwright is an unwillingness to concentrate upon a theme. When he can support his wonderfully observant eye and his delicately tender heart with a slightly firmer intellect, he should write a great play. The acting in *London Wall* is near perfection. Owing largely, I am sure, to Miss Auriol Lee's power as a producer, every member of the cast seems predestined for his or her particular part. Among the welter of imbecile and incompetently produced plays which have been emptying the London Theatres, *London Wall* is as surprising as a good picture in the Royal Academy.

The Old Vic Ballet

The Old Vic has given its first full programme of ballet. With Mr. Constant Lambert as conductor and Miss Ninette de Valois as choreographer there is no reason why ballet at the Old Vic should not become very good indeed. I noticed that under Mr. Lambert the playing of the orchestra was a great deal more accurate and spirited than usual, and Miss Valois' choreography was graceful and for the most part appropriate. She tends at the moment to make the most of scissor movements (many of the sharp finishes were excellent), and to neglect the slower, more deliberate passages in which gestures are apt to become conventional. In a programme of music by Mozart, Debussy, Schubert, Hugh Bradford, Gounod, Bach, and Vaughan Williams, it should have been possible to vary the dancing more. One bad mistake was made in hurrying the movements of the dancers to Bach's superb slow Air on G String; and I thought the choreography of the first part of Debussy's *Danse Sacrée et Dance Profane* too restrained. But how many good things there were in the evening! Miss Valois and Mr. Anton Dolin danced extremely well (except, surprisingly, when they were together); an eighteenth-century blind-man's-buff had just the right impish freedom, and the chain and pointed toes of a Tyrolese dance made gracious jigging. The most ambitious piece was Mr. Hugh Bradford's *The Jackdaw and the Pigeons,* performed for the first time. I thought the music pleasant but undistinguished; but it gave Miss Valois the chance to droop and flutter charmingly as the jackdaw who tried to join the pigeons.

* * *

Things to see and hear in the coming week:

Sunday, May 10th—
S. K. Ratcliffe on "Fresh News from Chicago," Conway Hall, 11.
Monday, May 11th—
"The Hairy Ape," by Eugene O'Neill, Ambassadors Theatre.
Florence Kahn in Pirandello's "The Life I Gave Him," Theatre Royal, Huddersfield, 8.0.
Mr. Kenneth Clark on "The Study of Art History," University College, 4.
"Die Fledermaus," Covent Garden, 8.15.
Tuesday, May 12th—
"Der Rosenkavalier," Covent Garden, 7.45.
"Speed," by Barry Lyndon, Phœnix Theatre.
Heifetz, Piano Recital, Queen's Hall, 8.15.
Debate on "Being 'Torquemada' of the *Observer* and fraudulently concealing the fact," between Father R. A. Knox and Miss Dorothy Sayers.
Miss Muriel Harris on "The Tendency of the Modern Style in France," London School of Economics, 8.
Wednesday, May 13th—
"The Mantle," by Basil Mason, Arts Theatre.
"Die Zauberflote," Covent Garden.
Thursday, May 14th—
"The Good Companions," His Majesty's Theatre.
Professor Graham Wallas on "Science and Ethics," Conway Hall, 7.30.
"Tristan und Isolde," Covent Garden, 7.
Friday, May 15th—
Royal Philharmonic Society, conducted by Sir Henry Wood, Queen's Hall, 8.15.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

MR. J. WOOD KRUTCH is one of the most acute of modern American critics. He is not free from the tendency, old here, and lamentably vigorous in America, to confuse æsthetic with moral and psychological values; but there is no question that he understands æsthetic values, and anything he writes about books is worth a respectful reading. So I opened *Five Masters* (Cape, 12s. 6d.) with interest and curiosity. I put it down with the suspicion that the study of the novel is not Mr. Krutch's proper line of country. To begin with, whom does he choose in this volume designed to pursue "the development of the novel through the lives and personalities of five men who left the imprint of their genius upon it"? Boccaccio, Cervantes, Richardson, Stendhal, Proust. It is a list of remarkable artists but it would only be a slight exaggeration to say that none of them was primarily a novelist. In his preface Mr. Krutch says this about the novel.

> The novel seems to me a mixed form. No other literary genre contains so much taken directly out of the life of the writer or out of the civilisation amidst which he lives. It was developed out of the need to get more of "life" into literature than was possible in more artificial forms and it is this fact which I offer as an excuse for the mingling of biography and criticism, psychology and aesthetics. A "pure" critical method is not required in treating a form of art which is not itself "pure," which is, as I consider the novel always to have been, merely *tending* to detach itself from autobiography and document and merely tending towards pure art.

* * *

This passage contains much exciting and disputable stuff. Is there anything in Mr. Krutch's suggestion that more of "life" can be got into a novel than into a play? Or to put it concretely, is there more "life" in *Madame Bovary* than in *Rosmersholm*? Again, is it true that an impure work of art is best considered in an impure mode of criticism? Could not the converse be more plausibly maintained? And in his contention that the novel is only "tending to detach itself from autobiography and document," I think that Mr. Krutch is either postulating of the novel what is perhaps true of history, or else saying something that is applicable to every kind of literature. No doubt there is document, and there is autobiography behind the least actual lyric ever written. Who can say with confidence that the whole of the life of William Blake may not be expressed in lyric? This is not merely niggling criticism, because I feel that Mr. Krutch's premises have governed his choice of authors, that his choice of authors has inevitably side-tracked that study of the development of the novel, which was his purpose. None of his authors is a novelist—that is, with none is the first motive the telling of a story about people whom it is the ambition of the teller to make more real than one's neighbours. That is the novelist's aim. He must want to tell a story. He must want to give life to the characters in his story. And he must want these two things above and before all else. Boccaccio told many supreme stories, but his people are puppets or types; and in spite of apparent frivolities, there is behind the *Decameron* the unease and menace of the plague. The author and the actors have, all the time of the telling of those tales, something more powerful, something dreadful in their minds.

Cervantes made a great character; and, as Mr. Krutch points out in one of his most sagacious passages, Cervantes, alone among great authors, accepted the legend of Don Quixote and in the second part of that great book started with the Quixote that the world had made from the heroic knight of the first part.

> His creator, having sent him forth into the world, took him up again after he had become legend and himself completed what he had begun. . . . He gave Don Quixote to the world in the first part of his romance and then took him back again to be completed after the world had already made more of him than an author unaided could have done.

Yet the symbolic and moral purpose of *Don Quixote* keeps it as much outside the novel proper as is Rabelais's masterpiece or Bunyan's: for Pantagruel is also a growing, living character, and so is Christian, even though he be but a rough wood-block beside the rich painting of Cervantes and Rabelais. With Richardson we come to an author whose influence on novelists was immense, whose influence on the novel is practically nil. He introduced into fiction—it was in the drama long before—introspection and self-analysis; but his novels are unwieldy, badly constructed, with many passages of infinite tedium. Richardson is of all great authors the most disgusting—to use that word in the sense of his century. That he was not found so, except by such a born novelist as Fielding, is merely evidence of the extent to which at his time it had become a matter of common belief that self-improvement consisted largely in the rebuking and disciplining of one's neighbours.

* * *

Stendhal has claims to be a great novelist, and his influence on the novel is still active. I cannot help thinking that Mr. Krutch exposes his own distaste for the novel by his confession that he finds "Stendhal more interesting as a character than an artist." It is too early to decide what position Marcel Proust will hold in world-literature; but he has no more chance of being remembered as a novelist than Montaigne, or Pierre Bayle, or Walter Pater. He has one of the novelist's gifts to an excruciating extent: his characters are unpardonably alive, but they move in a world not of ideal history, as do Balzac's or Flaubert's or Turgenev's or Tolstoy's or Dickens's, but in a world of actual history. The great novelists create characters whom we all feel sure we have met, but have not: Proust creates characters whom very many people have met. A great novelist must have something poetic in him when he comes to his men and women; Proust always loses his poetic sense in the presence of his fellow-creatures, except, perhaps, in the Dantesque portrait of Charlus. He alone at times moves monstrously in a poetic hell; Albertine, Madame Verdurin, Bergotte and the rest are citizens of that plain, prose hell which Proust constructed out of his disillusionment with the world.

The last volumes of Proust's work, translated by Mr. Stephen Hudson, have just been published—*Time Regained* (Chatto and Windus, 21s.). In it Proust sums up his story, and attempts to justify his choice of method. In a way he attempted in art that "crystallisation" which Stendhal advocated in another connection; the whole of his work is, in a way, an attempt to force on the intruding present the strength of things remembered. Proust was of the race for whom memory or anticipation provided the only escape from a torment of suspicion and distrust. Whether he recognised the present at all is doubtful. All artists, to some extent, unless they are purely objective in their art, must be self-conscious about the present; the artist, among other characteristics, always has the trait of the man in Mr. Kipling's poem—"I stands beside and watch myself Be'aving like a bloomin' fool." The novelist, of all artists, tries hardest to be rid of that trait; and I am sure that if the novel is to survive, whether as a pure or an impure form, it will depend largely on the capacity of writers to attain objectivity. Mr. Krutch's authors are masters, but not of the novel; that praise might be given to another five—Fielding, Balzac, Flaubert, Turgenev, and Dostoevsky.

RICHARD SUNNE.

NEW NOVELS

House with the Magnolias. By Ralph Arnold. Heinemann. 7s. 6d.

Four Handsome Negresses. By R. Hernekin Baptist. Cape. 7s. 6d.

Four Frightened People. By E. Arnot Robertson. Cape. 7s. 6d.

The King of Men. By Alan Miller. Nash and Grayson. 7s. 6d.

Four in Family. By Humphrey Pakington. Chatto and Windus. 7s. 6d.

I Sit Alone. By Waldemar Ager. Harpers. 7s. 6d.

The Apostate. By Vladimir Lidin. Cape. 7s. 6d.

Mr. Kello. By Frederick Watson. Harrap. 3s. 6d.

How easily some people write a book! Of course it's just a gift—as the unaccomplished, the doubtful, the admiring sometimes say, a little enviously perhaps, but also by way of comfortably accounting for the phenomenon simply by naming it, when someone of their acquaintance shows some outstanding proclivity. And though that seems but a partial way of putting it, yet it sometimes puts it all, when the gift seems unsupplemented by anything with which labour might have enriched it. One is really forced to the conclusion that there are those who do not write their books in the bitter sweat of their face, nor break their backs or their hearts over them, though this of course is quite contrary to the rules laid down by the best authorities for any work of art. It is to be feared that Mr. Ralph Arnold must have enjoyed the writing of his talented *House with the Magnolias*, and that it hardly even exhausted him. He has not demanded of himself to write a filled-in, finished-off novel. He can give such an excellent suggestion of a character in a few light analytical phrases that it would not seem necessary to give more; and he can so carelessly keep a complete surprise up his sleeve that perhaps it would be folly not to let it do instead of a "plot." He casually and separately takes a boy (perfectly school-mastered) until he is a young man, and a girl until she is a young woman; he then "meets" them, and proceeds to give you that careless but most effective and convincing blow that he has utterly unprepared you for. I wondered why Caroline's and Leo's conversation, at their exuberant, half lover-like second meeting, was so inane, until I received the shock that gave their inanity its point and pathos. And I wondered why Mr. Arnold troubled to tell me so little about John Emberlin, Caroline's official suitor, until I suddenly found I had been told nearly everything. It's just a gift, of course.

Four Handsome Negresses tells, with too much pains, an unforgettable story. An elaborate manner, which many readers will wish were a plainer one, an Alma Tadema posing of the figures, and tremendous "word-pictures" for terrible situations, have been made by Mr. Baptist his indefatigable care. The matter of the book is this: In the days of Portuguese pioneer exploration, four negresses were taken aboard a ship off the Guinea coast, as an early chronicle relates, and landed separately at different points on the African coast. The idea was that, being women and therefore less likely to be killed than men, they should carry the blessings of civilisation, with which they should first be primed, to new ground. The story shows how the Governor, the Prior, and the merchant on board, sponsors of the expedition, all look to have their particular interests spread. An example of the style he has used to create his scene will show Mr. Baptist's conception of his duties in composition:

> Æthiopia guards her children, grimaces forbiddingly at the intruder. She lures him to her breast with the rose-cloud of flamingoes above a glass-cold lake with the promise of dense green shade, with the strange scents of unseen fruit. But once within the portals she offers him a maddening draught of salt-brack water, opens her temples of miasma and decay. In horrifying silence the giant Circe receives her guests. Civilised man turns, twists, gasps for sound as a drowning man for air. Inexorably she folds the poor babbler to her black and fatal breasts.

But though the industry might have been spared that makes so romantic a style, nothing could have been spared of the thoroughness with which the author goes into the horror of his tale—a horror not merely artistically effective but justified as a conceivable encounter between civilisation and savagery. And when the horror and invention are at their most vital, the grandiose language seems to enter into a more reasonable relationship with them. The four negresses are subjected to the lust of the crew, while they are tutored with ludicrous inadequacy in the equipment that will make them the medium for commerce with savages. To each one then is dealt out by the author her separate appalling fate.

Abundant talent and pains combined are responsible for Mrs. Arnot Robertson's very modern new story, also of a tropical voyage, and a journey through the Malayan jungle made by four English people. Having discovered that the existence of bubonic plague is being kept secret on board the ship, one woman and two men (one of whom is her cousin, and the other her accepted lover before the end), plan to leave the ship and take to the jungle; and a second woman, discovering their plan, is taken from necessity. The miserable boat, in "that tropical pest, a light following breeze which robbed the ship's movement of any freshening effect on the stagnant air," the heat which made "a bare arm, though weighed down by its own indolence, shrink from contact with the hot wooden side of a chair," hearts thumping from the effects of a stroll, the forest closed everywhere but for twelve yards around, in which leeches came galloping towards their feet to cling there like "little limp bags of blood," are all described with as telling an exactitude as the characteristics of the adventurers themselves. The Conrad-Masefield school of novelists has been apt to make human nature distinctly noble when pitted against the jungle. It is perhaps rather indicated that you should invest your hero with what dignity human nature can display in his struggle with the forest which seeks to destroy him—though not so much by its enmity as its indifference. In this book things are otherwise. The four frightened people consist of three clever, hard and selfish ones and one amiable bore (the indifference of the forest being, perhaps, therefore justified); and we are intended to care for their escape from danger not more than to be intrigued by their Bloomsbury wit and wisdom. There is this to be said for the more heroic treatment—that the mightier victim seems to give you a mightier forest. Here it is a comparatively innocuous one, and even though it might destroy the four, it could not destroy the reader. The amusement and interest and occasional irritation aroused in the reader by the views and observations certainly dull him to the presence of danger. Danger is effaced even by boredom (not ours) when Mrs. Mardick steps forward with her "Just *listen* to the stillness! Can't you almost *hear* it?" and her way of bringing home to the others their discomforts by being brave and cheerful about them—Mrs. Mardick, intolerable chatterer, who is successfully lost by the others in the jungle, in not too dangerous a situation. A bore has seldom been better done, and boredom never. Her danger, too, forms only a small item of the interest one feels in the narrator of the story, the young woman doctor who with her "I" draws the reader into a frank cold intimacy, and who is never too perturbed to make her views plain. "How fundamentally it divides mind from mind," she says, describing her "congenital inability" to have religious faith, "this incomprehensible power, manifested by half the world, to believe what is comfortable to believe, because it is comfortable. Among those who are congenitably inefficient at this sleight-of-reason are all my friends, and the strangers who are potential friends." The uninfluential forest does not interrupt her habit of cool self-analysis: puzzling out which of two motives had governed one of her actions, she remarks: "Myself, I never give anyone the benefit of a doubt of this kind, because people have given it to me throughout my life on all possible occasions, and I have very seldom deserved it." Neither does it in the slightest degree impair her exceedingly witty sense of character. But what, I should wish to know, is the use of a jungle which does not give pause to such conversations as that which decides that the only "bloody-mindedness" in the War was to be found in the old. What a lot one would have to forget, or to pretend, before one said so.

Mr. Miller's is a gentler spirit, but how much less witty a one! There are no shafts of irony in his picture of a world in which a ray has been discovered which eliminates sex instincts. The discoverer, an eccentric pathologist, crossed in love himself and unnerved by the awfulness of the power he finds himself possessed of, unlooses the contagious germ upon the race. But panic-stricken governments at last track down Corry, the discoverer, and his French assistant; Corry dies by his own hand, and the assistant in time discovers the antidote. All this part of the book, though without literary art, is written flowingly and holds the reader's interest, but before the disease-crisis develops three-quarters of it has been taken up with the personal relationships of the characters, stated somewhat laboriously and clumsily.

Four in Family is a delightful, high-spirited family story, in which all the affairs connected with the building of a luxurious country house, and the social gatherings in its neighbourhood, are related with a charming and observant humour. The incident of the irritable bishop who, having kicked his wife accidentally in the train, is not sorry that it happened, will perhaps indicate to you how Mr. Pakington makes his characters human and absurd in a stroke.

I Sit Alone is written in that spirit of confidence in having the ear of the reader that can begin: "The earliest memories of my childhood's home are —" and can settle in a leisurely manner to the task. The book is a translation, and it is a Norwegian who sits alone, on a Dakota farm, and remembers his Norwegian days. If a tinge of sentimentality enters into his reflections, they have also the freshness and sweetness of genuine observation and feeling. *The Apostate*, also translated, is a fiercer story of Communist student life in Moscow, not unlike records there have already been of the particular brand of poverty and loves and despairs that beset that particular brand of youthfulness. *Mr. Kello*, advisedly reprinted after a first appearance in 1924, was certainly written by the sweat of its author's brow, with pains taken over the elaborate plot, and successful labour to achieve the telling atmosphere of superstition, Scotch presbytery, fanatical minister and witch-burning.

PROTEUS.

THE MAN IN THE STREET

My Northcliffe Diary. By TOM CLARKE. Gollancz. 8s. 6d.

"The man in the street" is notoriously a myth. We seldom meet a man who accepts all the recognised clichés, who possesses all the proper moral, national and class prejudices, who takes the whole *Daily Mail* for gospel. But that is just what Northcliffe did, and that was why his were the largest circulations. He never had his tongue in his cheek. He naturally and spontaneously appealed to the lowest common factor in the population. He was an extraordinarily ordinary man. Whereas other ordinary men are kept sane and comparatively unsuccessful and harmless by little devils of doubt inside them and by friends who puncture their absurd complacencies, Northcliffe was so sublimely uncritical, so humourless and self-assured that he could make an enormous fortune simply by seeing to it that his newspapers never failed to supply what he himself liked best. Apparently no one ever gave him the least idea that he was making a fool of himself. Even his mother, for whom he had so deep and sincere an affection, seems never to have fulfilled the salutary function of laughing at him. Mr. Clarke, whose diary is full of excellent material for those who want to understand what average human nature is really like when allowed to run wild, even found Northcliffe impressive rather than ridiculous when he tried on Napoleon's hat, and reported with dramatic seriousness that it fitted him. No one was there to point out that it would have fitted quite a number of chimpanzees equally well.

Take a few other specimens of his conversation as reported by Mr. Clarke. "Women have no sense of responsibility unless you frighten them. I understand women. They do not understand discipline unless they are going to lose something." Then he talked about the weather. . . . When there was a coal strike he talked of "creeping paralysis," and Mr. Clarke's comment is "How he loved to invent these verbal vignettes." He had all the vulgarian's love of size: his passion for the Empire competed with his passion for America—both were so marvellous because they were big, just as the excellence of a paper was to be tested by the size of its circulation. One of the most idiotic of his clichés (one which, on Mr. Clarke's testimony, was often on his lips) was to the effect that "big rooms go with big men and big ideas;" he therefore refused to let his staff talk in comfort in an ordinary room, driving them out into a colossal board room whose dimensions were supposed to infect their policy. In his private mansion he showed his guests first a small room and then, with a gesture, displayed "a vast apartment" of his own. One of his guests misunderstood and ventured that he had thought the small room below was Northcliffe's. The Chief replied: "My dear young man, that was her ladyship's room. Little rooms are no good for big ideas." He never forgot that he was the big noise.

Northcliffe was the supreme, instinctive judge of a news story. He knew the exact selling value of an exciting and militant treatment of foreign policy, knew just how many extra copies would be sold by a good crime—especially, as he remarked, if there was a woman in it—he first understood the value of sport as a best-seller and invented a whole group of popular topics about short skirts, and blowing your nose, standard bread, —stuff which has been comprehensively known as "slush for the women," but which goes down just as well with the men. His division of news into two parts—interesting "facts" and "talking points"—was admirable. And he never left off impressing all these lessons on his subordinates. He constantly boasted that he had read all the papers by 5.30 in the morning, and would then telephone his editors who were often "on trial" and who had been making up his paper most of the night (he himself went to bed at 9.30 sharp), and begin bullying, scolding and fooling them, reminding them that he "had his eye on them," that this was their "big chance," that they "would not get another," that that morning's paper was the worst in London, and then, when they were exasperated beyond bearing and about to resign, he would suddenly send them off "to see the world," to spend in America or on the Riviera "all the money they could" at his expense. Sometimes he played on them jokes as stupid and cruel as those which Frederick the Great enjoyed at the expense of his dependants; sometimes he walked with them in the moonlight, grew sentimental about his destiny and country and announced that his great regret in life was that he had never been to Oxford.

Now all this would be merely entertaining if modern journalism was not so largely built on Northcliffe's foundations. It is not the business of newspapers to give the public everything it wants, that is, everything it can be induced to buy in the largest quantities, any more than it is the duty of a doctor to supply nice-tasting medicine because patients will pay more for it. The journalist is, or should be, a professional person, an expert whose duty is to understand some branch of public on social affairs, to present it to the public as honestly and readably as he can. Of course, that is not the way to produce the largest circulations and the most inflated profits. It was Northcliffe who introduced into this country the notion that news is just a commodity, to be sold for profit like the ink and paper used for presenting it. Clearly the commercialism of

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The King of Men. By Alan Miller. Nash and Grayson. 7s. 6d.

Four in Family. By Humphrey Pakington. Chatto and Windus. 7s. 6d.

I Sit Alone. By Waldemar Ager. Harpers. 7s. 6d.

The Apostate. By Vladimir Lidin. Cape. 7s. 6d.

Mr. Kello. By Frederick Watson. Harrap. 3s. 6d.

How easily some people write a book! Of course it's just a gift—as the unaccomplished, the doubtful, the admiring sometimes say, a little enviously perhaps, but also by way of comfortably accounting for the phenomenon simply by naming it, when someone of their acquaintance shows some outstanding proclivity. And though that seems but a partial way of putting it, yet it sometimes puts it all, when the gift seems unsupplemented by anything with which labour might have enriched it. One is really forced to the conclusion that there are those who do not write their books in the bitter sweat of their face, nor break their backs or their hearts over them, though this of course is quite contrary to the rules laid down by the best authorities for any work of art. It is to be feared that Mr. Ralph Arnold must have enjoyed the writing of his talented *House with the Magnolias,* and that it hardly even exhausted him. He has not demanded of himself to write a filled-in, finished-off novel. He can give such an excellent suggestion of a character in a few light analytical phrases that it would not seem necessary to give more; and he can so carelessly keep a complete surprise up his sleeve that perhaps it would be folly not to let it do instead of a "plot." He casually and separately takes a boy (perfectly school-mastered) until he is a young man, and a girl until she is a young woman; he then "meets" them, and proceeds to give you that careless but most effective and convincing blow that he has utterly unprepared you for. I wondered why Caroline's and Leo's conversation, at their exuberant, half lover-like second meeting, was so inane, until I received the shock that gave their inanity its point and pathos. And I wondered why Mr. Arnold troubled to tell me so little about John Emberlin, Caroline's official suitor, until I suddenly found I had been told nearly everything. It's just a gift, of course.

Four Handsome Negresses tells, with too much pains, an unforgettable story. An elaborate manner, which many readers will wish were a plainer one, an Alma Tadema posing of the figures, and tremendous "word-pictures" for terrible situations, have been made by Mr. Baptist his indefatigable care. The matter of the book is this: In the days of Portuguese pioneer exploration, four negresses were taken aboard a ship off the Guinea coast, as an early chronicle relates, and landed separately at different points on the African coast. The idea was that, being women and therefore less likely to be killed than men, they should carry the blessings of civilisation, with which they should first be primed, to new ground. The story shows how the Governor, the Prior, and the merchant on board, sponsors of the expedition, all look to have their particular interests spread. An example of the style he has used to create his scene will show Mr. Baptist's conception of his duties in composition:

> Æthiopia guards her children, grimaces forbiddingly at the intruder. She lures him to her breast with the rose-cloud of flamingoes above a glass-cold lake with the promise of dense green shade, with the strange scents of unseen fruit. But once within the portals she offers him a maddening draught of salt-brack water, opens her temples of miasma and decay. In horrifying silence the giant Circe receives her guests. Civilised man turns, twists, gasps for sound as a drowning man for air. Inexorably she folds the poor babbler to her black and fatal breasts.

But though the industry might have been spared that makes so romantic a style, nothing could have been spared of the thoroughness with which the author goes into the horror of his tale—a horror not merely artistically effective but justified as a conceivable encounter between civilisation and savagery. And when the horror and invention are at their most vital, the grandiose language seems to enter into a more reasonable relationship with them. The four negresses are subjected to the lust of the crew, while they are tutored with ludicrous inadequacy in the equipment that will make them the medium for commerce with savages. To each one then is dealt out by the author her separate appalling fate.

Abundant talent and pains combined are responsible for Mrs. Arnot Robertson's very modern new story, also of a tropical voyage, and a journey through the Malayan jungle made by four English people. Having discovered that the existence of bubonic plague is being kept secret on board the ship, one woman and two men (one of whom is her cousin, and the other her accepted lover before the end), plan to leave the ship and take to the jungle; and a second woman, discovering their plan, is taken from necessity. The miserable boat, in "that tropical pest, a light following breeze which robbed the ship's movement of any freshening effect on the stagnant air," the heat which made "a bare arm, though weighed down by its own indolence, shrink from contact with the hot wooden side of a chair," hearts thumping from the effects of a stroll, the forest closed everywhere but for twelve yards around, in which leeches came galloping towards their feet to cling there like "little limp bags of blood," are all described with as telling an exactitude as the characteristics of the adventurers themselves. The Conrad-Masefield school of novelists has been apt to make human nature distinctly noble when pitted against the jungle. It is perhaps rather indicated that you should invest your hero with what dignity human nature can display in his struggle with the forest which seeks to destroy him—though not so much by its enmity as its indifference. In this book things are otherwise. The four frightened people consist of three clever, hard and selfish ones and one amiable bore (the indifference of the forest being, perhaps, therefore justified); and we are intended to care for their escape from danger not more than to be intrigued by their Bloomsbury wit and wisdom. There is this to be said for the more heroic treatment—that the mightier victim seems to give you a mightier forest. Here it is a comparatively innocuous one, and even though it might destroy the four, it could not destroy the reader. The amusement and interest and occasional irritation aroused in the reader by the views and observations certainly dull him to the presence of danger. Danger is effaced even by boredom (not ours) when Mrs. Mardick steps forward with her "Just *listen* to the stillness! Can't you almost *hear* it?" and her way of bringing home to the others their discomforts by being brave and cheerful about them—Mrs. Mardick, intolerable chatterer, who is successfully lost by the others in the jungle, in not too dangerous a situation. A bore has seldom been better done, and boredom never. Her danger, too, forms only a small item of the interest one feels in the narrator of the story, the young woman doctor who with her "I" draws the reader into a frank cold intimacy, and who is never too perturbed to make her views plain. "How fundamentally it divides mind from mind," she says, describing her "congenital inability" to have religious faith, "this incomprehensible power, manifested by half the world, to believe what is comfortable to believe, because it is comfortable. Among those who are congenitably inefficient at this sleight-of-reason are all my friends, and the strangers who are potential friends." The uninfluential forest does not interrupt her habit of cool self-analysis: puzzling out which of two motives had governed one of her actions, she remarks: "Myself, I never give anyone the benefit of a doubt of this kind, because people have given it to me throughout my life on all possible occasions, and I have very seldom deserved it." Neither does it in the slightest degree impair her exceedingly witty sense of character. But what, I should wish to know, is the use of a jungle which does not give pause to such conversations as that which decides that the only "bloody-mindedness" in the War was to be found in the old. What a lot one would have to forget, or to pretend, before one said so.

Mr. Miller's is a gentler spirit, but how much less witty a one! There are no shafts of irony in his picture of a world in which a ray has been discovered which eliminates sex instincts. The discoverer, an eccentric pathologist, crossed in love himself and unnerved by the awfulness of the power he finds himself possessed of, unlooses the contagious germ upon the race. But panic-stricken governments at last track down Corry, the discoverer, and his French assistant; Corry dies by his own hand, and the assistant in time discovers the antidote. All this part of the book, though without literary art, is written flowingly and holds the reader's interest, but before the disease-crisis develops three-quarters of it has been taken up with the personal relationships of the characters, stated somewhat laboriously and clumsily.

Four in Family is a delightful, high-spirited family story, in which all the affairs connected with the building of a luxurious country house, and the social gatherings in its neighbourhood, are related with a charming and observant humour. The incident of the irritable bishop who, having kicked his wife accidentally in the train, is not sorry that it happened, will perhaps indicate to you how Mr. Pakington makes his characters human and absurd in a stroke.

I Sit Alone is written in that spirit of confidence in having the ear of the reader that can begin: "The earliest memories of my childhood's home are — " and can settle in a leisurely manner to the task. The book is a translation, and it is a Norwegian who sits alone, on a Dakota farm, and remembers his Norwegian days. If a tinge of sentimentality enters into his reflections, they have also the freshness and sweetness of genuine observation and feeling. *The Apostate*, also translated, is a fiercer story of Communist student life in Moscow, not unlike records there have already been of the particular brand of poverty and loves and despairs that beset that particular brand of youthfulness. *Mr. Kello*, advisedly reprinted after a first appearance in 1924, was certainly written by the sweat of its author's brow, with pains taken over the elaborate plot, and successful labour to achieve the telling atmosphere of superstition, Scotch presbytery, fanatical minister and witch-burning.

PROTEUS.

THE MAN IN THE STREET

My Northcliffe Diary. By TOM CLARKE. Gollancz. 8s. 6d.

"The man in the street" is notoriously a myth. We seldom meet a man who accepts all the recognised clichés, who possesses all the proper moral, national and class prejudices, who takes the whole *Daily Mail* for gospel. But that is just what Northcliffe did, and that was why his were the largest circulations. He never had his tongue in his cheek. He naturally and spontaneously appealed to the lowest common factor in the population. He was an extraordinarily ordinary man. Whereas other ordinary men are kept sane and comparatively unsuccessful and harmless by little devils of doubt inside them and by friends who puncture their absurd complacencies, Northcliffe was so sublimely uncritical, so humourless and self-assured that he could make an enormous fortune simply by seeing to it that his newspapers never failed to supply what he himself liked best. Apparently no one ever gave him the least idea that he was making a fool of himself. Even his mother, for whom he had so deep and sincere an affection, seems never to have fulfilled the salutary function of laughing at him. Mr. Clarke, whose diary is full of excellent material for those who want to understand what average human nature is really like when allowed to run wild, even found Northcliffe impressive rather than ridiculous when he tried on Napoleon's hat, and reported with dramatic seriousness that it fitted him. No one was there to point out that it would have fitted quite a number of chimpanzees equally well.

Take a few other specimens of his conversation as reported by Mr. Clarke. "Women have no sense of responsibility unless you frighten them. I understand women. They do not understand discipline unless they are going to lose something." Then he talked about the weather. . . . When there was a coal strike he talked of "creeping paralysis," and Mr. Clarke's comment is "How he loved to invent these verbal vignettes." He had all the vulgarian's love of size: his passion for the Empire competed with his passion for America—both were so marvellous because they were big, just as the excellence of a paper was to be tested by the size of its circulation. One of the most idiotic of his clichés (one which, on Mr. Clarke's testimony, was often on his lips) was to the effect that "big rooms go with big men and big ideas;" he therefore refused to let his staff talk in comfort in an ordinary room, driving them out into a colossal board room whose dimensions were supposed to infect their policy. In his private mansion he showed his guests first a small room and then, with a gesture, displayed "a vast apartment" of his own. One of his guests misunderstood and ventured that he had thought the small room below was Northcliffe's. The Chief replied: "My dear young man, that was her ladyship's room. Little rooms are no good for big ideas." He never forgot that he was the big noise.

Northcliffe was the supreme, instinctive judge of a news story. He knew the exact selling value of an exciting and militant treatment of foreign policy, knew just how many extra copies would be sold by a good crime—especially, as he remarked, if there was a woman in it—he first understood the value of sport as a best-seller and invented a whole group of popular topics about short skirts, and blowing your nose, standard bread—stuff which has been comprehensively known as "slush for the women," but which goes down just as well with the men. His division of news into two parts—interesting "facts" and "talking points"—was admirable. And he never left off impressing all these lessons on his subordinates. He constantly boasted that he had read all the papers by 5.30 in the morning, and would then telephone his editors who were often "on trial" and who had been making up his paper most of the night (he himself went to bed at 9.30 sharp), and begin bullying, scolding and fooling them, reminding them that he "had his eye on them," that this was their "big chance," that they "would not get another," that that morning's paper was the worst in London, and then, when they were exasperated beyond bearing and about to resign, he would suddenly send them off "to see the world," to spend in America or on the Riviera "all the money they could" at his expense. Sometimes he played on them jokes as stupid and cruel as those which Frederick the Great enjoyed at the expense of his dependants; sometimes he walked with them in the moonlight, grew sentimental about his destiny and country and announced that his great regret in life was that he had never been to Oxford.

Now all this would be merely entertaining if modern journalism was not so largely built on Northcliffe's foundations. It is not the business of newspapers to give the public everything it wants, that is, everything it can be induced to buy in the largest quantities, any more than it is the duty of a doctor to supply nice-tasting medicine because patients will pay more for it. The journalist is, or should be, a professional person, an expert whose duty is to understand some branch of public on social affairs, to present it to the public as honestly and readably as he can. Of course, that is not the way to produce the largest circulations and the most inflated profits. It was Northcliffe who introduced into this country the notion that news is just a commodity, to be sold for profit like the ink and paper used for presenting it. Clearly the commercialism of

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news is incompatible with democracy which can only function on a basis of reliable news and free comment. Northcliffe did society a service when he first popularised the newspapers. For the old papers of the '90s were only written for the few. He did it a disservice from which recovery is very difficult when he degraded the intelligence of the public by appealing almost exclusively to its emotions and prejudices. He went far to undermine the fabric of democracy when by his commercial success he drove out most of the serious papers and made possible the ownership and control of the press by a few men who could decide what news and comment should be allowed to reach the public. Mr. Tom Clarke is not, of course, concerned with the social aspects of the matter: he "fell for" Northcliffe, and if he does not see the implications of his story, we may at least be grateful to him for presenting it to us as a living diary, frank and readable and full of unconscious instruction.

KINGSLEY MARTIN.

SIEGFRIED'S ENGLAND

England's Crisis. By ANDRÉ SIEGFRIED. Translated by H. H. HEMMING and DORIS HEMMING. Cape. 10s. 6d.

So many rather silly things have been said by way of rejoinder to this book, as if it was the spiteful and slanderous product of a hostile mind bent on lowering Britain's international credit, that one might begin by noting, not merely that Professor Siegfried is a politico-economic writer of high standing which no serious student disputes, but that he is a friend to this country. Though his book appears in English, it obviously was not written for English, nor yet for American, readers. It was written for French readers, to give the facts as the author sees them; and in this way he at many points can more easily attain objectivity and impartiality than one of ourselves writing on ourselves and for ourselves could do. If at these points the portrait is often unflattering and the conclusions pessimistic, there is no question of the writer's gloating at our expense. "We fully appreciate," he says of his own countrymen, "the link that binds us in Europe to Britain's destiny. I do not know an intellectual Frenchman who is not distressed to think of the present decline in British prestige." Nor is he unmindful of our resilience and our hidden resources. "In Europe, for the past few years, we have been daily preparing a first-class funeral for England—and yet she is not necessarily down and out."

The "crisis" which he studies has two key characteristics—at home, our chronic unemployment; abroad, the serious decline in our export trade. The two are closely connected, since we should have little chronic unemployment, were it not for that in the export industries. Fundamentally M. Siegfried puts it down to over-high wage-costs, mainly due to wages remaining fixed while prices have fallen, as shown first in 1925 by M. Jacques Ruegg's now celebrated chart. So far he is in accord with Sir William Beveridge's recent study of unemployment; which also reprints M. Ruegg's chart, though with some refined corrections not attempted by M. Siegfried. The latter, however, traces many subsidiary factors: the weight of taxation; the failure of many British concerns to modernise their plants or their products or their salesmanship or their outlook; changes in economic geography and in the world demand; and a number of serious acquired defects in our national psychology affecting in different ways most sections of our people.

Some of these points are very effectively developed. Nothing could be better, as a short sketch, than, for instance, the contrast drawn on pp. 94-8 between the classes of articles which we export and those which America exports; and there are plenty of official British trade reports to back its truth. Again, the probings of British psychology, though mainly unflattering, are often truer than we care to admit. M. Siegfried finds one of the clues to our outlook in an intense inner self-confidence. At the bottom of his heart the Englishman does not believe that any Continental can ever be his equal, let alone his superior. This makes him unusually willing to hear criticisms upon himself, because however much they tickle his interest, he never really takes them to heart. For the same reason, unfortunately, he seldom acts on them; and when he suffers in consequence, his first instinct always is to find that some foreign nation is to blame. M. Siegfried traces amusingly, and not wholly without justification the successive striking examples of this since the War. They originated, he thinks, with England's profoundly, because unconsciously, Anglocentric philosophy.

Her instinct is to try to restore the conditions which suited her, instead of revising her own standards and adapting them to a world in which they are now out of place. French opinion is dumbfounded by such arguments, yet they are met even in the most responsible circles. If one suggests that English wages are too high for competition—very well, let the Continental nations raise theirs; that the English working day is too short—reduce your own; that the English standard of living is pretentious—renounce your measly economy, civilise yourselves, be like us, learn how to live! England wishes the mountain to come to Mahomet.

Some readers may object perhaps, because M. Siegfried does not mention certain facts with which we are apt to console ourselves—*e.g.*, that British engineering holds all three of the world's speed records; on land, in the water, and in the air. But the omission probably means nothing more than that he does not share the "sport" complex, which makes us think of victories in championships as if they could be equated with defeats in the staple markets of the world. Others have resented what he reports as to the dullness, boorishness, and incapacity for educated conversation, which foreign business men are said to find in their British opposite numbers. But some of us have far too often heard this experience related, in good faith, by both Frenchmen and Germans, to doubt that it has a serious foundation. The fact is that before the Education Act of 1902, we had in England no good system even of secondary (let alone university) education for our business classes; and a large proportion of the men over forty-five in the upper ranks of our trade to-day left very poor schools at fourteen, fifteen, or sixteen. Similar men in France or Germany have usually far more education behind them, and their higher culture tells—not in conversation only.

On the whole, then, though no Englishman will agree with it all, this is a tonic and stimulating, because able and honest, critique of our national situation. What of our future? M. Siegfried considers at some length, whether we are likeliest to seek salvation by drawing closer to Europe, to America, or to our Empire. He points out how very far the Empire markets must be from sufficing us, especially in view of the Dominions' attitude to our manufactures. As between Europe and America, he thinks that we shall delay decision as long as possible. And perhaps—for the spirit of England has "unlimited powers of adaptation and life"—we may finally succeed in making the best of both worlds.

BIRD-WATCHING AND PHOTOGRAPHY

Watchings and Wanderings Among Birds. By H. A. GILBERT and ARTHUR BROOK. Arrowsmith. 10s. 6d.

Bird Life in Devon. By W. WALMESLEY WHITE. Cape. 7s. 6d.

Bird Life in England. By JOHN KEARTON. Allan. 12s. 6d.

The partnership between Captain Gilbert and Arthur Brook the photographer of Builth is one of few cases of a division of labour between bird-watching and bird-photography. It evidently works, for their new book takes the collaborators from Radnor and Pembroke to Orkney and even Hungary, getting pictures in excessively trying conditions. Being able to put all his energy into the text, Captain Gilbert is consistently controversial, and some of his challenges deserve to be taken up. He repeats, for example, the familiar egg-collecting plea that collectors cannot be blamed for the decrease of the chough, with the corollary that the harm done by collectors is exaggerated. No doubt other factors have contributed heavily; it is well known that until a bird becomes rare the collector normally takes little interest in it. But then the rarer it becomes the higher the price of its eggs and skin rises, and the more the forces of commercial exploitation are concentrated on it. Such cases as the shooting by Jardine of "nearly thirty specimens in a forenoon" on the Isle of Man, and the childish hoard of choughs' eggs dispersed at the sale of the Crewe Collection not long since, put apologists of collecting in a weak position. The toll of collecting on the chough has certainly been injurious, although by no means the sole cause of its decline of numbers. The suggestion that choughs are being displaced by jackdaws is equally far from the whole truth: if that were the real explanation, why have choughs entirely vanished from Lundy, where there are not and never have been jackdaws, while still surviving in Pembrokeshire where jackdaws are common? In writing of the hen-harrier Captain Gilbert refuses to defend a collector who has taken "an unnecessary number of eggs," and here surely is the only legitimate criterion: any number of eggs collected is unnecessary beyond those taken for specific scientific objects by specialists engaged in research.

The book is as readable and the pictures as good as those we have been led to expect from the partnership. Such observations

RECENT FICTION

Four Frightened People

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HAROLD NICOLSON in the *Evening Standard*

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HOWARD MARSHALL in the *Daily Telegraph*

'. . . . passionate—but quite unnecessary.'
Glasgow Herald 7s. 6d.

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'Mr. Bates can *write* which is the great thing. "Charlotte's Row" should not be missed by anyone interested in the development of the English novel.' GERALD GOULD in the *Observer*
7s. 6d.

THE TWO SISTERS, by H. E. BATES, is available in *The Travellers' Library* 3s. 6d.

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'I think Eric Linklater's book brilliant.' HUGH WALPOLE

'A writer whose satirical humour, extensive vocabulary and high spirits never flag.' *Morning Post.* *Thirty-fifth thousand.* 7s. 6d.

The Apostate

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'A picture of student life in contemporary Moscow. Lidin makes no attempt to hide the squalor of conditions in Moscow, but he shows us also a type of worker who is driven by sincere idealism to extremes of self-abnegation. This is the background. Lidin's main story describes the decadence of a student from the provinces who is lured into gambling and murder by evil companions.' *Daily Telegraph*

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A SELECTED LIST OF FICTION TITLES

1	Can Such Things Be?	AMBROSE BIERCE
2	The Black Dog	A. E. COPPARD
14	Dubliners	JAMES JOYCE
20	The Dream	H. G. WELLS
22	Clorinda Walks in Heaven	A. E. COPPARD
24	The White Ship	AINO KALLAS
26	Spring Sowing	LIAM O'FLAHERTY
28	The Country of the Pointed Firs	SARAH ORNE JEWETT
34	The Monk and the Hangman's Daughter	ADOLPHE DANZIGER DE CASTRO & AMBROSE BIERCE
45	The Conquered	NAOMI MITCHISON
71	Mastro-Don Gesualdo Giovanni Verga	Translated by D. H. LAWRENCE
87	Liv	KATHLEEN COYLE
99	The Black Soul	LIAM O'FLAHERTY
100	Christina Alberta's Father	H. G. WELLS
104	The Little Karoo	PAULINE SMITH
128	The Informer	LIAM O'FLAHERTY
129	The Beadle	PAULINE SMITH
156	December the Fourteenth	DMITRI MEREZHKOVSKY
158	Black Sparta	NAOMI MITCHISON
159	Men Without Women	ERNEST HEMINGWAY
160	The Two Sisters	H. E. BATES

COMING SHORTLY

The Old Wives' Tale ARNOLD BENNETT
in two volumes

Write to the publishers for a full list of titles, also for a list of volumes in *The Life and Letters Series* as the communal feeding of young glossy ibises in Hungary, the drenching of young storks in very hot weather with water fetched by the parent from a pond, or the note, "As soon as we came in sight of the gannets the topmost layers of the colony, consisting of about a thousand birds, looked up and were instantly sick" are so out of the ordinary that but for Captain Gilbert's reputation they would be treated with a certain amount of suspicion. The pictures of the Spoonbill at home and the account of changes in the bird population of mid-Wales since 1900 deserve special attention.

After a long interval Devon has become quite suddenly an active bird-watching county, and Mr. Walmesley White's is the third book to appear recently dealing with its bird life. The formation of a society which has undertaken among other tasks a census of Devon buzzards is another sign of the revival. Whichever of the recent Devon bird books may prove redundant, it will definitely not be Mr. Walmesley White's. He possesses three unquestionable qualifications—an intimate knowledge of his district and its birds; a gift for constructive, pointed observation, and a notable capacity of expression. How good an observer he is becomes most apparent where he takes a single species and devotes a chapter to it. The account, for example, of the red-backed shrike is a definite contribution to the life-history of one of the more neglected and interesting British birds. He finds from a considerable amount of watching that the well-known "larder" is an occasional rather than a general feature, and that the victims, far from being left impaled for days till they are "high," or entirely forgotten as some have suspected, are, in certain cases, at least completely changed from day to day. One such shrike larder contained at 6.30 p.m. the headless corpse of a wren, the leg and wing of a great tit, the wing of a blue tit, two chestnut-tailed humble-bees and a cockchafer: next day by 5.30 p.m. all these had vanished and had been replaced by three field-voles' heads, half a body and one tail, two more bees and two shrews, one of which had only just been impaled. If this rate of turnover is at all common the red-backed shrike must be a good deal more destructive than had been imagined, on the supposition that a larder represented several days' accumulation, and these field-notes suggest that it would be well worth while to undertake intensive observation into the food consumption of several pairs of shrikes next summer.

Mr. Kearton writes simply and vividly for an unsophisticated audience. Few popular bird books are so accurate and so interesting as *Bird Life in England*. His pictures, mostly of fairly common forms, avoid the usual bird-photographer's temptation to find his interest purely in scarce birds taken always in the same stereotyped attitudes. Here the value of the illustrations is due to an exceptional gift for taking familiar species from an original and intelligent point of view.

SCRIBNERS

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The Daily Mail says—
His book is written with such dispassionateness, such insight and such complete mastery of the facts, that its verdict is of supreme importance.

SCRIBNERS

CAN YOU GET TO HEAVEN IN A FORD?

Moving Forward. By HENRY FORD, in collaboration with SAMUEL CROWTHER. Heinemann. 8s. 6d.

In *The Decline of the West* Spengler says that our world will no longer create in the spiritual realm. The time for great thought and art is past, and our energies will now find material expression. As a prophecy this may be worthless; but it is obviously a true description of a tendency in modern life, and it seems that Mr. Ford's book has been written to illustrate the tendency. *Moving Forward* reveals a man with the energy and decisiveness of genius, a man who appears to have unconquerable force. Even if a reader takes up the book with a firm intention of mocking, he will be forced toward admiration and respect. And if he is one of those whom Mr. Ford dismisses scornfully as "bookish men," he will also be forced toward pessimism. For all this strength, this undeniable greatness, is directed by a mind so naïve, so spiritually inert, that it cannot imagine a non-material value. Mr. Ford considers himself religious because he approves of church-going, and moral because he tells his workmen that they must not live apart from their wives. But this is his furthest excursion away from the world of material accomplishment. Business, he says, "is this day our one earthly anchor to all that civilization means." And, again, "We know now that anything which is economically right is also morally right. There can be no conflict between good economics and good morals." When it is realised that these are the considered opinions of one of the great men of the day, the Spenglerian doom comes unpleasantly to mind, and the future looms vast and vulgar and insufferably Roman.

If *Moving Forward* be considered not as a sign of the times, but simply as a treatise on modern industry, it is an encouraging book. Mr. Ford may yet save industrialism from the diseases that threaten it. Certainly, he is confident that he can do so; and after reading this book it is hard not to share his confidence. He is sure that with the constantly improved machine-processes that he and his like will provide, the whole industrial world will soon be converted to the system of high wages and low prices and the five-day week. Then there will be an enormous consuming class with money to buy, and with leisure to use. And then, in Mr. Ford's opinion, all must be well, since "the one way to emancipate people from a crass, materialistic state of mind is to give them plentiful material possessions!" Mr. Ford's optimism about the universal applicability of *Fordismus* will receive a practical test as soon as his Dagenham Factory is in operation. He promises, then, to sell his car in England at American prices. At present, a Ford two-seater can be bought in Detroit for about £79. If these prices come to England, in a factory with a five-day week and a minimum wage of a pound a day, a complete revolution in the automobile industry must follow—and if in the automobile industry, presumably in other industries as well. If the system works, capitalism may save itself for a long time yet, and the future be determined by the argument between Detroit and Moscow.

It is interesting to compare Mr. Ford's optimism over the possible industrial future of England with the gloomy picture given by M. Siegfried in *England's Crisis*. M. Siegfried, with his rigid nationalism and his old-fashioned talk about prestige, is pronouncing the doom of nineteenth-century England. But Mr. Ford, who may not know that there ever was such a thing as nineteenth-century England, sees a rosy future for the rationalised England of his dreams. And the thought that he may help to create this future gives him great pleasure. "It is to demonstrate that prosperity can be deliberately produced," he writes, "that we have planted our roots in foreign soils." Economically, Mr. Ford is as international-minded as a business man by Mr. H. G. Wells.

One of the interesting minor points in *Moving Forward* is the argument that "standardization, instead of making for sameness, has introduced unheard-of variety into our life," and that

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modern machinery exacts from the worker a higher craftsmanship than the old handicrafts. In attempting to make this point, Mr. Ford is self-contradictory and by no means finally convincing; but he has much to say that should be of interest to the "bookish men."

BEAUTY IN TROUBLE

Charlotte's Row. By H. E. BATES. Cape. 7s. 6d.

Mrs. Esmond's Life. By H. E. BATES. Lahr. 10s. 6d.

The artists who are quick to the beauty of the world are most sensitive to the hideous things, to the things which threaten and would destroy beauty. In the realm of ethics the same rule occasions no surprise: we know that sin and man's blundering ignorance occupy the minds, not of the stupid and the sinful, but of the world's saints and wise men, and we are accustomed to the devastation created in the souls of such men by the distresses of the world. Still, however, many expect that the artist shall concern himself only with the loveliness of the world, and in the end they will confuse beauty with a mere prettiness, forgetting that the lover of beauty must transmute or transfigure the hideousness of life. There is no author of stories more sensitive to perfection, to clear and lucid beauty, than Mr. H. E. Bates; and yet he comes before us in two books which, except for their style, are heavy with the world's ugliness, sorry with the world's injustice and the sad refusal to praise what is praiseworthy. The artist pipes and pipes of the gaiety and gladness of the world, and no one will dance. Instead man builds hideous things like Charlotte's Row, houses where live anger, deceit, drunkenness, unkindness, malice. Of all these drunkenness is the least blameworthy: at least it is a way out, and it is one of the bitterest things in the problem of our world that man cannot bear to abide in the spiritual city he makes for himself. Somewhere within his heart wings flutter still, faintly and yet more faint; and at times a man will let them fly in the air he has avoided to seek the beauty he has denied. That is the tragedy of Pauline; that is the tragedy of the boy; that is the tragedy of Pauline's catastrophically farcical, painful birthday-party. Her father is not truly a bad man, in spite of his brutality and his drunkenness; but he has built himself a prison of hideous wickedness, and must sometimes pretend he is free of it. Those who do not feel any of his need are indeed out of Charlotte's Row and in hell. This is a fine, painful, uncomfortable book, in which the author's integrity makes the moral far more effective than if he had in the least emphasised it.

The short story, *Mrs. Esmond's Life*, is even better, and must soon be issued in a more popular form than this, limited to three hundred copies. Mrs. Esmond runs a cooked meat shop, and Mr. Bates' account of her life turns one against all cooked flesh, so painfully sympathetic is it. A widow, she sees romance coming to her when Henryson, an old friend, is widowed; but the commercial traveller turns to Effie, her slow chlorotic daughter, and suddenly old age and disappointment are let down on Mrs. Esmond. The tragedy that blackens the life of all three has nothing of arrangement in it; in this story Mr. Bates reminds us of those early novels in which Mr. George Moore first tried to let us see a little of the lives of the hard worked.

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In this little book Mr. Bartlett discusses the present condition of International Affairs, with particular regard to the points of friction that have arisen as a result of the War, the various Peace Treaties, and the internal revolutions that have changed the governments and outlooks of many states out of all recognition. Much of what Mr. Bartlett has to say has already been said by him in the course of the wireless talks he has been giving during the past three years; nevertheless, the presentation of this matter in book-form is to be welcomed. It is only by mutual adjustments and compromises that perpetual and cumulative friction is to be avoided; understanding is the essential preliminary to sympathy with the other fellow's point of view, and so far as the facts can be correlated in so brief a precis, Mr. Bartlett has correlated them. As for interpretation, he is not dogmatic, and more often than not lets the facts speak for themselves.

Circus Nights and Circus Days. By A. H. KOBER. Sampson Low. 10s. 6d.

There is a literary-philosophic quality in Dr. Kober's circus reminiscences that gives his thorough and intimate record of circus life a most agreeable savour. Dr. Kober has travelled with a famous circus as press agent, and so has come to be looked upon by those with whom he has worked as the proper historian of their work and ways. In the present book he gives us a hundred vivid sketches of circus life and of the famous riders, acrobats, clowns and animal trainers he has known. He makes us understand the lure of the ring and the road, the caravan and the tent, that those who have once known it find quite irresistible. "Please, please, get me out of here," whispered an equestrienne lying in hospital with a broken leg, "take me back to the pitch where there is better air and where people have the right sort of eyes," eyes, explains Dr. Kober, that reflect courage, experience, and loving kindness. It is a curious homely world into which we stray; and the more bizarre the nature of the performer's art, the simpler seems to be the nature of his life. The book is fully illustrated.

In the Days of the Giants. By W. J. DOHERTY. Harrap. 10s.

In the introduction which he contributes to Mr. Doherty's boxing reminiscences, Lord Knebworth asserts that during the present century there has been a revolution in the boxing world, that the old school of fighters who thought a championship worth winning irrespective of the purse has disappeared, and with them the old spirit of the fighting man. The "old spirit," however, has died out and risen again more than once, and if boxing could rise from the shifty squalor into which it lapsed for a time in the 'forties of the last century, there is reason to hope that it can survive its present spectacular craziness. The period of which Mr. Doherty writes is that in which John L. Sullivan, James J. Corbett, Peter Jackson, Robert Fitzsimmons and Frank Slavin flourished. Mr. Doherty himself was one time heavy-weight champion of Australia, and he tells us the story of his fighting career from the time when as a boy he first saw Jem Mace, the last of the naked mauley fighters, then fifty years of age, to the day when his hands failing him he retired from the ring. It is most agreeable to read Mr. Doherty's stories of his own fights. Here, at any rate, is the "old spirit" at its height, for win or lose there is the same good humour and gusto, and always a sincere tribute to the adversary.

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steal sales from the Morris, Singer, Standard, Austin, Essex fraternity. There have been great trumpetings . . . a luncheon to innumerable dealers in the Albert Hall, with sample cars disporting themselves in the central arena; the tantalising sort of advertisement in the daily press first introduced by Chrysler, cunningly leading the reader to expect something very marvellous and revolutionary; all sorts of rumours and whisperings—in fact, the modern publicity man has done his best to create a frenzied demand for the Wizard. His best will be necessary; for by mid-April most people have placed their orders for new season cars, and selling is sluggish this year; the registrations for February, 1931, in the United Kingdom were 25 per cent. less than those for February, 1930. It is questionable whether such screeching publicity is not a blunder when the new infant is not really such a very dazzling baby after all. This Wizard is an excellent car of its type. In twelve months we may even be able to assert quite definitely that it is a far better car than any of its immediate rivals, whether British or American. For by that time its users will have tested out its paces and maintenance; the repairers will be familiar with its accessibility and dependability; and full data will be common property. At the moment, subject to two or three considerations of some importance, this much heralded car creates a tiny anti-climax. In its main outlines it might be roughly described as just another Morris-Oxford. Its dimensions are much the same, and its general specification is mildly similar. The wheelbase is 3in. less; the track is identical; with a saloon body it costs £5 less; with a coupé body it costs £14 more. Those of its rivals whose intelligence departments were uncertain of the facts a week ago, are probably heaving deep sighs of relief; for there had been talk of a 15 h.p. six-cylinder saloon at a fantastically low price.

Nevertheless, there are several features in which this car excels the rest. Its designers have stolen a leaf from the Ford book. It is sold with two different engines. The larger engine is taxed at £21, has a low compression ratio, and is intended for export to countries which do not suffer from a horse-power tax. The smaller engine, provided for home use, is taxed at £16, and thanks to a higher compression ratio retains a useful road performance; though five or six miles an hour slower than the 21 h.p. it is capable of just over sixty on the open road. This is a very sensible method of outflanking the Treasury rating, but, of course, it is not original. Moreover, the Wizard has a fourspeed gearbox with a silent third. Americans and colonials still fail to appreciate a four-speed gearbox at its true value, but no experienced Briton will voluntarily use a three-speed box on home roads, when he can get four speeds at his price with the kind of specification which he likes. Here again there is nothing original.

There has been so much exaggerated screeching about the car that I am a little chary of praising it in detail; but attention may fairly be drawn to the road behaviour of its engine. This is by no means exceptionally speedy on top gear, for the bodies are large; but the acceleration is really good, and the car runs very nicely at walking pace on top gear. The third gear speed is merely normal, 45 m.p.h. being obtainable on full throttle; experienced men will recognise that this is a useful speed for solitary work on that gear, but not high enough to facilitate overtaking. On the other hand, greater speed on third would imply a rougher engine with a higher compression—one cannot have flexibility, low tax, and great speed in one and the same unit; and flexibility is a most desirable factor for the ordinary driver, who hates changing gear every few yards in city traffic. Overseas, this flexibility is valued even more than we value it. The suspension is better than the average. The brakes are excellent, though owners might prefer a master adjuster, as postponing the date at which the car must be jacked up on all four wheels to restore full braking efficiency.

The coachwork deserves full marks. I have not got all the necessary comparative measurements to hand, but it is probably roomier than any other saloon in its class. The occupants are exceptionally well protected against engine heat and engine fumes, ample "breathing" being furnished under the bonnet, with sealed pedal slots. The bodies will, of course, be of the all-steel variety, and as such should remain silent. All the usual gadgets are provided. I hope some day to see a coachbuilder evolve a new control for glass windows; my women friends all complain of the winding handles fitted to all modern cars; only this week I saw a valuable fur coat badly ripped by such a handle, and they are even more damaging to flimsy summer draperies. The Hillman has them; on the front doors the winders are set far forward, and are unlikely to inflict damage to women's clothes; on the rear doors they are positioned for ease of operation with the crew seated, but where they are liable to catch the clothing during exit and entrance. Only the de luxe models have built-in luggage containers; and these containers are on the small side, scaled rather for the sake of appearance than for serving the needs of a full crew. The cheaper models retain the naked luggage grid.

The technical details of the chassis are all admirable, and the agents, who survey new cars with a rather cynical eye, profess themselves charmed with the design from a service point of view. In fine, if the car had been introduced with rather less of a screech, one might be tempted to become moderately fulsome about it; but it will not actually dominate the 1931 market as imperiously as its publicity men have tried to suggest.

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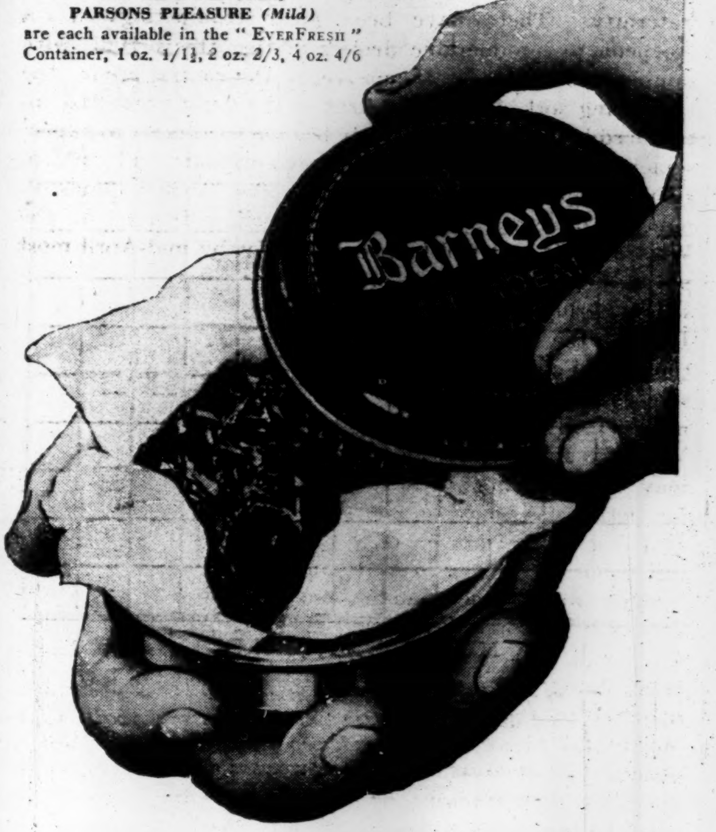

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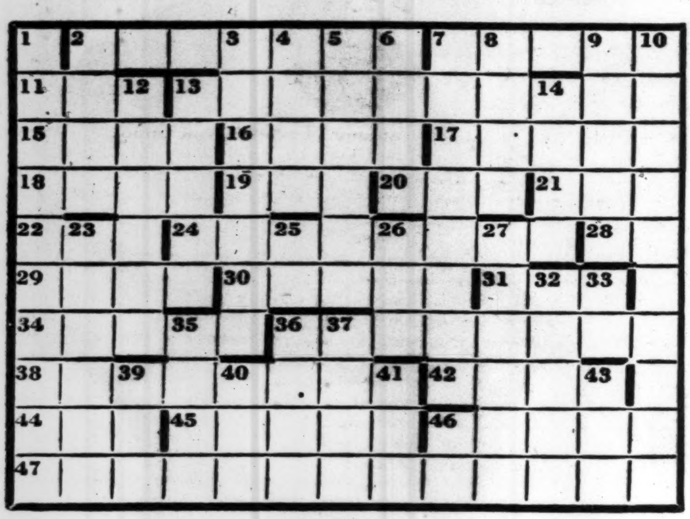
PLAYTIME

BY CALIBAN.

TRINCULO'S CROSSWORD



MINISTERING ANGEL.

There was a willow grew aslant a brook
That in the glassy stream his hoar leaves showed,
And there she met her end, who earlier took
These tokens to her sorrow-crowned abode :
Across : 2, 7, 24 ; *Down* : 1, 12, 39.

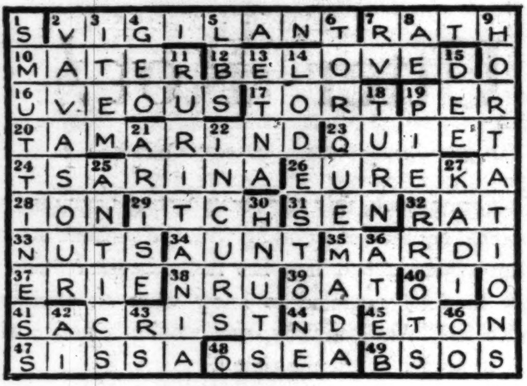
ACROSS.

11 He's half a loafer, and he's all a lout.
13. To get them " all het up "—but what about ?
15. Confused the distance, mineral and tree.
16. Little by little source of food can be.
17. Gold, partly ; mountain, partly ; all by ear.
18. We'll make no bones about it—bone, appear !
19. A rare beginning, and a common end.
20. Mixed up, our way Mahometwards we wend.
21. A single foot contains twelve thousand me.
22. The witless one without his vowels we see.
28. How versatile—receives, returns, recruits.
29. Some hint of castigation 'mongst the roots.
30. Take from its frame—it's nearly time for bed.
31. Telegram ? Try typography instead.
34. *Dulce est desipere*—one takes the tip.
36. Thousand of millions ; stir, the thing's a snip.
38. Thus one escaped who from an airplane fell.
42. Of more than puss, of provender, I tell.
44. Now " with a difference " you can wear your rue.
45. Expression of a native comes to view.
46. Builder, but hardly for the distant years.
47. Behold Miss Dot ; and Carrie, too, appears.

DOWN.

2. Though wan in sound, it might be full of blood.
3. If Trinculo were this, he'd rank as dud.
4. What would the oculist seek first at Kew ?
5. And what does he who works with acid do ?
6. One makes entreaty ; see, their eyes are black.
7. Rejected plays these qualities may lack.
8. Reverse a saxhorn ; be contiguous still.
9. The holy man needs air. Then, climb your fill.
10. These lads in pocket one would gladly put.
13 *rev.* Begin by car ; go all the way on foot.
14. Confuse a queen and then re-mobilise.
23. Here Mr. Horn to walk the ceiling tries.
25. I know not sin—draw pole to distant pole.
26. My tally bring, and thus your thoughts control.
27 *rev.* The lady's drink is spilt ; I'll put you right.
32. Symbol of power—comparative of might ?
33. What Cæsar's dog dug up and overturned?
35. Though wedded long, our partnership she spurned.
36. A good long pull, though hair it largely be.
37 *rev.* My master is a judge of high degree.
40. Once more the good old bishop must intrude.
41. Miss Robsart waves her heels, in care-free mood.
43. You might be right, if wrong you chance to do.
46. An office that Elizabethans knew.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD



S	V	I	G	I	L	A	N	T	R	A	T	H
M	A	T	E	R	B	E	L	O	V	E	D	O
U	V	E	O	U	S	T	O	R	T	P	E	R
T	A	M	A	R	I	N	D	Q	U	I	E	T
T	S	A	R	I	N	A	E	U	R	E	K	A
I	O	N	I	T	C	H	S	E	N	R	A	T
N	U	T	S	A	U	N	T	M	A	R	D	I
E	R	I	E	N	R	U	O	A	T	O	I	O
S	A	C	R	I	S	T	N	D	E	T	O	N
S	I	S	S	A	O	S	E	A	B	S	O	S

THE MAY QUEEN.

BRIDGE

BY CALIBAN.

HOW TO BID AT CONTRACT: A SERIES OF ILLUSTRATIVE HANDS.

VII. SHEWING A SECOND SUIT.

♠ A Q 7 3 2
♥ 5
♦ K 10 8 6 4
♣ Q 7

♠ J 9 8 5 4
♥ 10 9 7 6
♦ A 3 2
♣ 5

N
W E
S

♠ K 10 6
♥ Q 8 4 2
♦ 7
♣ A 9 6 3 2

♠ None
♥ A K J 3
♦ Q J 9 5
♣ K J 10 8 4

Score : Love-all. South deals.

The Bidding :

South	..	1 ♣	2 ♥	5 ♦
West	..	No Bid	No Bid	No Bid
North	..	1 ♠	3 ♦	No Bid
East	..	No Bid	No Bid	No Bid

Notes on the Bidding.

South's hand is a good " two-suiter "—he has a nice initial One Bid in either Clubs or Hearts. Clubs, however, should be bid first, the Club suit being numerically the stronger. This is a rule from which the beginner should *never* deviate. Regardless of the honour-trick strength of the respective suits, he should bid the longer one first.

Provided, that is, that it is " biddable " at all.

North's " take-out " into Spades is fairly obvious. Here, holding two suits of *equal* length, he takes out into the *higher-valued* one. This, again, he should do regardless of their honour-strength. Thus, holding

♠ K 10 8 6 4 ♥ 5 ♦ A Q 7 3 2 ♣ Q 7

his " take out " bid is still One Spade.

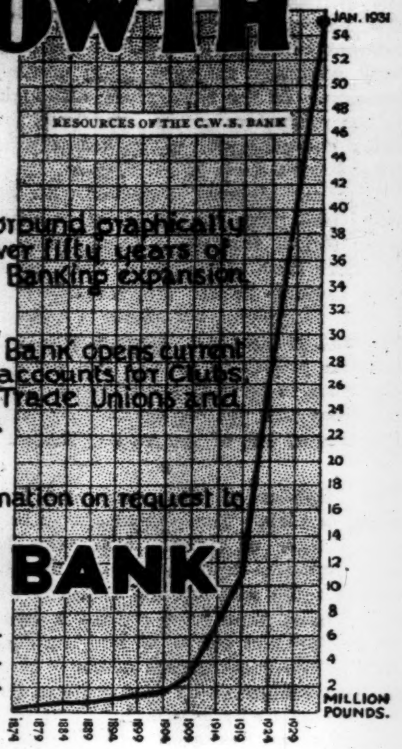
South now shows his second suit, the Hearts, by implication denying his partner's Spades. Note that a No Trump bid by South would be very bad. He might never get into his partner's hand at all.

North must now bid the Diamonds in the hope that this will prove the winning suit. It does. South is strong enough for a double raise, and accordingly bids for game.

In play, North-South lose only the two adverse aces.

CALIBAN'S CONTRACT CAPTIONS—No. 9.

Where you would make your two suits known
The longer one should first be shown ;
But if they're equal, then what's done ?
You bid the higher-ranking one.



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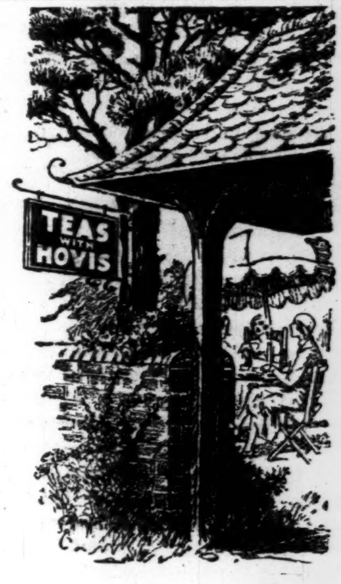

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THE N·S·P·C·C

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

BY TOREADOR.

THE FIXED TRUST—ITS APPEAL AND ITS SHORTCOMINGS—THE UNDERGROUND DEAL.

THE stockbroker wore a sickly smile when he heard Mr. Snowden budgeting upon an increase in the receipts from the Stamp Duties. How, he wondered, was the Stock Exchange to get business when each day it marked down the prices of securities in every market, except the gilt-edged? Something desperate had to be done, and here it is! The First British Fixed Trust has arrived—from America. With the stock business at such a low ebb it was inevitable. The Fixed Trust was invented by American brokers for the purpose of selling the largest amount of stock, especially in times of depression, to the largest number of investors. The Americans have always led the world in salesmanship, and the Fixed Trust is the climax of the stock salesman's art. What the hire-purchase system is to the department store, the Fixed Trust is to the pedlar of stocks. Consider how it appeals. "Spreading investment risks," the guiding principle of all British investment trusts of the management type, has been preached *ad nauseam* to the investing classes. The small investor has wilted at the thought that he has not had enough capital to spread. The Fixed Trust comes to his aid. It constructs a "unit" representing, say, four ordinary shares respectively of twenty-eight leading industrial and trading companies which satisfy certain dividend and profit-earning tests (I am quoting the prospectus of the North American Trust). It deposits these "units" in a bank, acting as trustee, and creates "shares" representing, say, one two-thousandth part of a "unit." The small investor, in buying a share, is thus enabled to "spread his investment risks" to a degree hitherto impossible with his limited capital. He pays a price for the share based upon the current Stock Exchange quotations for the component stocks, and he can withdraw on the same basis. He receives semi-annual distributions calculated on the dividends received and on the proceeds of the "rights" and "bonuses" acquired on the securities held in the "unit." He probably feels proud, being a poor man, to possess twenty-eight of the best equity stocks in the country.

* * *

The small investor is therefore apt to welcome the fixed trust as an ingenious method of sharing in capital profits without taking great capital risks. He knows what stocks he is buying and he cannot be "let down" by management mistakes. Indeed the fixed trust is really a confession of the bankruptcy of management. It is designed to substitute a fool-proof machine for foolish directors. That the shares of fixed trusts sell like "hot cakes" among small investors in America is shown by the results. The largest of these trusts claims to have marketed $145 millions' worth of shares. The total sale of fixed trust shares in the last two years is estimated at not less than $400 millions. There is the good American salesman at work! It is appropriate that the First British Fixed Trust should be sponsored by the representatives of an American house—J. G. White and Company of New York. But the objections in principle to the fixed trust are many. First, its component stocks are chosen for their past dividends and earnings record—"jobbing" backwards is always very impressive—and it goes without saying that the "winners" of to-day are not necessarily the winners of the next two decades. The *Economist* not long ago compiled an imaginary British Fixed Trust to include thirty of the most popular ordinary shares in 1912 as distinguished by low market yields, large capitalisation and high dividends. The result in 1930 was a depreciation of 57 per cent. on the original capital and an average annual return of 3½ per cent. by way of dividends and rather less by way of capital rights. By way of contrast the *Economist* followed up an investment in 1912 in the stocks of ordinary British investment trust companies *selected at random* and found that by 1930 there was an appreciation of 61.2 per cent. on the original capital and an average annual income of 8.2 per cent. with average capital receipts of 4.9 per cent. Comment is superfluous.

* * *

In the second place, the fixed trust in America is usually bound under its articles to sell a share which passes its dividend. This means in practice that the trustees have to watch a share slumping in the market, when its dividends are in question, and to sell out at the bottom when the dividend has been passed. The First British Fixed Trust tries to escape from this dilemma by giving its trustees the power to sell a share if the net earnings of the company fall below the average of the preceding five years. Under this rule they would have to sell one of the component shares of the unit—Babcock & Wilcox—before even the Trust was established, although Babcock & Wilcox is a sound enough company suffering quite normally from a world trade depression. In the third place, although there are no directors' fees, the promoters of the fixed trust do not work for nothing. Besides commissions, which are comparatively high because the fixed trust deals in small sums, there is an arbitrary charge for issue and deposit, together with a percentage (usually 5) of the total price of the share to cover cost of distribution. Buying shares through a fixed trust often costs about 9 per cent. more than if the shares were purchased direct. The fact that a London broker was recently offered a commission of 2 per cent. for placing the shares of a fixed trust plus an additional 1 per cent. if sales were large, suggests that the promoters have handsome profits to spare. My counsel to the small investor is therefore to leave the fixed trust alone. If he wants to avoid great risks and yet see capital appreciation he should invest in the shares of one of the leading British insurance companies.

* * *

The Minister of Transport and Lord Ashfield have been making history. The representative of State Socialism and the representative of private enterprise have hung their hats—bowler and silk—upon a common hat-stand, have sat down to a common table and by the common exercise of patience, tact and reasonableness have "done a deal" covering the issue of over £59,000,000 worth of London Passenger Transport Board stocks to the stockholders of the "Underground" group. The deal was confirmed by the stockholders last week, who have every reason to be gratified. Their prior charge securities gain in security and lose nothing in income (the tramway preference stocks gain in both), while their equity stocks, which will be exchanged for C stock of the Board carrying 5 per cent. interest for the first two years and thereafter ranking for 6 per cent., are very fairly treated.

* * *

As regards Underground prior charges which will receive A or B stocks of the Board, these should be bought whenever a yield of 5 per cent. is obtainable, for it is generally expected that the Board's A and B stocks, under present monetary conditions, will stand on a 4.9 per cent. yield basis. As regards the ordinary stocks, the C stock of the Board should not be quoted below 80. Lord Ashfield declared that the terms proposed in respect of the other traffic undertakings are such that the Board should enjoy an income more than sufficient for the payment of the due interest on the C stock. If this interest falls into arrears, the stockholders can apply to the Court for the appointment of a receiver and manager. Moreover the C stock cannot be "watered" by subsequent issues, for new capital must be raised in proper proportions from all classes of stock. Actually the Underground Electric Railways' ordinary shareholders emerge with better terms than the market expected. (Hats off to Lord Ashfield and a sympathetic cheer for Mr. Morrison!) The company will retain intact all its interests in (*a*) the Associated Equipment Company (subject to the restriction of a period of ten years of the right of that company to supply the L.G.O.C. with omnibus chassis and spare parts); (*b*) the North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Company (plus the right to buy the holding in that company of the Metropolitan Electric Tramways), and (*c*) the South Metropolitan Electric Tramways and Lighting Company. It is proposed to transfer these interests to a new holding company and to wind up the Underground Electric Railways Company. The holder of 100 ordinary shares of £1 of the Underground will then receive, according to Lord Ashfield's estimates, £115 of C stock (yielding at first £5 15s. on the basis of 5 per cent. interest, and ultimately £6 18s. on the basis of 6 per cent. interest) and an amount of stock in the new holding company yielding £2. Thus, in return for a present income of £8, the holder of 100 Underground shares will receive immediately £7 15s. and ultimately £8 18s. I am not, therefore, ashamed of having recommended Underground shares on March 21st at 22s. 6d. The shares will rise, a happy commentary on the introduction of the new Socialism. Public control, business management immune from political interference, and a contented private ownership of the stock—here are the constituents of a new order of State enterprise. It is evident that the same principles will have to be applied to the main-line railways if they are to be rescued from bankruptcy or if the railway electrification scheme is to be put into practice.

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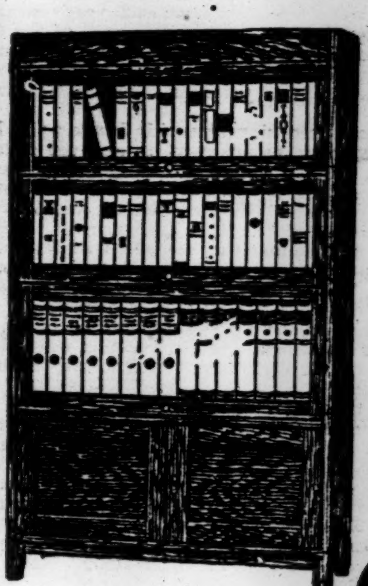

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COMPANY MEETING

THE UNDERGROUND.

LONDON PASSENGER TRANSPORT BILL.

Meetings of the Debenture stockholders and stock and share holders in the Underground Electric Railways Company of London, Limited, Metropolitan, District Railway Company, London Electric Railway Company, City and South London Railway Company, Central London Railway Company, London General Omnibus Company, Limited, London and Suburban Traction Company, Limited, Metropolitan Electric Tramways, Limited, London United Tramways, Limited, South Metropolitan Electric Tramways and Lighting Company, Limited, Tramways (M.E.T.) Omnibus Company, Limited, and Lots Road Power House Joint Committee were held on May 1st, at the Central Hall, Westminster, S.W.1.

The Right Hon. Lord Ashfield, who presided, in the course of his speech, referring to the London Passenger Transport Bill now before a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament, said: This Bill empowers the Minister of Transport to set up a Board to which is to be transferred all the local passenger transport undertakings within the London Traffic Area. The transfer is to be compulsory, and it is not intended that you shall receive cash in respect of your present interests, but that you shall receive stocks of the Board instead.

The amendments which we are seeking in the London Passenger Transport Bill are in the nature of safeguards to ensure that the Board has a large measure of independence, and that the directions which are given to the Board for the conduct of the combined undertaking are such as will reasonably assure to you the rates of interest. For instance, the "C" stock to be dependent upon each year's earnings for its interest, the rate of interest not to exceed in each of the first two years 5 per cent. or thereafter 6 per cent. per annum, subject to the provisions of paragraph 3 below.

The "C" stock to be redeemable at par after twenty-five years at the option of the Board.

This paragraph must be read in conjunction with Clause 25 and 31 of the Bill. Clause 25 states that transport stock and the interest thereon shall be charged on the undertaking and on all the revenues of the Board, and for that purpose the different classes of stock shall rank in the order of priority in which they are named, which is the order of priority set out in the memorandum. The Clause also provides that the guarantee which the Government has given in respect of certain debenture stocks of our Railway Companies shall be continued unchanged in respect of the "T.F.A." stock to be issued in exchange for them, the redemption provisions in respect of such stocks being also continued unchanged. Clause 31 defines the manner in which the revenues of the Board shall be applied and both clauses will require some amendment in order to make them accord with the provisions of paragraph (2) and of paragraph (3).

For the past three years the holders of ordinary stocks of the four Underground Railway Companies have been receiving dividends at the rate of 5 per cent. When in place of every £100 of their present holdings they have received £92 10s. in "C" stock of the Board, they will, for the first two years, when the interest upon the "C" stock is limited to 5 per cent., receive a return at the rate of £4 12s. 6d. per cent. on their present capital. This is a small reduction, temporary in character, and, as I have explained, has for its object ensuring the future success and stability of the Board's undertaking. After two years they are to receive 5½ per cent. upon their holding of "C" stock, which means that their return upon their present capital would be at a rate just over 5 per cent. (£5 1s. 9d. to be exact), and when, as we expect, the Board pays out of its further income an additional one half of one per cent., making 6 per cent. in all, they will receive a return upon their present capital at the rate of £5 11s. 0d. per cent. At that time they will be at least one-half of one per cent. better off than they are to-day.

When all the transactions are concluded it is estimated that the Underground Company should have at its disposal roundly £12,500,000 of "C" stock. Subject to the provision of any moneys which may be required for the winding-up and to enable the various arrangements to be carried through it is thought that there should be sufficient "C" stock to permit every holder of Ordinary shares in the Underground Company receiving £115 of "C" stock in exchange for every £100 in nominal value of Ordinary shares held by him. At the present time a holder of Ordinary shares in the Underground Company is receiving dividends at the rate of 8 per cent. It is estimated that of the 8 per cent. now paid at least 6 per cent. is attributable to holdings in the transport companies to be dealt with under the Bill. As against this 6 per cent. which he now receives, a holder of £115 of "C" stock should receive by way of interest during the first two years, when the interest on the "C" stock cannot exceed 5 per cent., 5.75 per cent., and thereafter, when the interest upon the "C" stock rises to 5½ per cent., 6.325 per cent., and if the "C" stock should, as may be anticipated, pay 6 per cent., 6.9 per cent. To all these rates of interest must be added the dividends which he will receive from his shares in the proposed new holding company. These are expected to be equivalent to another 2 per cent.

There must be no confusion between the possible 6 per cent. on the "C" stock and the interest which on the above calculations the Underground shareholder would receive in the event of such 6 per cent. being paid. This difference between the interest on the "C" stock at 6 per cent. and the interest receivable by the Underground shareholders of 6.9 per cent. corresponds approximately to the existing difference in the dividends of the operating and holding companies and is a consequence of the financial structure of the holding company.

I have no hesitation in recommending to you the acceptance of the terms of the memorandum as being in your best interests.

After discussion a resolution was passed approving the action of the chairman, and authorising him to continue his negotiations with the Minister and bring them to a conclusion.

COMPANY MEETING

SPILLERS LIMITED.

SUCCESSFUL YEAR'S TRADING.

THE Rt. Hon. Sir Malcolm A. Robertson, P.C., G.C.M.G., K.B.E., presiding at the Annual General Meeting of Spillers Ltd., at Cardiff, on Saturday, said that he had accepted the Chairmanship of the Company with the utmost possible diffidence, but he would endeavour to justify the confidence which the other members of the Board had placed in him, which he trusted the shareholders would confirm.

The profit of the Company for the year amounted to £413,592 19s. 4d., and the payments made out of these profits, including a transfer of £100,000 to the Reserve for Depreciation of Investments, left available for disposal £275,890 14s. 9d. The directors proposed to deal with this by the payment of a 10 per cent. dividend on the Ordinary Shares and 6¼ per cent. on the Co-partnership Shares, and to carry forward the balance of £129,546 4s. 3d. to the next account.

WHEAT AND GRAIN MARKET CONDITIONS.

Heavy declines had taken place in values of all grain during the year under review owing to Russia re-entering the world market in which she had previously held such a prominent place, the position being aggravated by the restriction of imports of foreign wheat into certain European countries.

The general effect of this and of our present free market in wheat from the point of view of the bread consumer in this country, was shown by the comparative prices of the 4-lb. loaf in different countries, for instance in Germany 1s. 5¾d., Sweden 1s. 6d., United States 1s. 4¾d., Canada 1s. 1d., Australia 11d., compared with the price ruling in Great Britain of 7d.

QUOTA PROPOSALS.

There were a number of objections to the quota system which had been proposed for the assistance of the English farmer, and this system was not approved by the British millers as a whole, who considered it unwise, uneconomic and unnecessary.

The proposed quota for Dominion wheat again would be very difficult to administer, mainly for the reason that, as was not generally realised, the different kinds of wheat were by no means interchangeable. Millers, however, would be compelled to bow to reasons of major policy affecting the whole nation, especially if increased employment would result.

So far as Russian wheat was concerned, even under a quota system it would have to be strictly limited, in view of the fact that on account of the conditions under which it was said to be produced and transported, Russia might be able to secure the whole of the non quota market at the expense of Argentina, in which this country had over £500,000,000 of capital invested.

A guaranteed price for British wheat would entail a subsidy by the taxpayer and a simpler and more direct method of dealing with the difficulty would be a tax on foreign wheat, coupled with the necessary corollary of prohibition or limitation of import of foreign flour. The latter policy was necessary if the British miller had artificially to increase the cost of his grist, and it was a fact that the present milling capacity was materially in excess of the possible consumption. This policy would not only have the effect of increasing employment, but would make available annually 6,000,000 cwt. of wheatfeed for the benefit of the British stock raiser.

No advocates of the establishment of an Import Board had yet explained what advantages it was supposed to have over the present system which secured for our home population the cheapest flour and bread in the world.

The results of the Company's trading for the past year had been due in some measure to the recent rationalisation of the Flour Milling Industry enabling the Company as a consequence to concentrate on trading within economic distances of their different mills.

The Report and Accounts were adopted.

THE
ODNEY CLUB
COOKHAM, BERKSHIRE

THE Club belongs to the John Lewis Partnership, which is itself a far-reaching experiment in social and industrial reform.

Membership of the Club is open, of course, to all members of the Partnership, but the grounds (which are finely timbered and cover more than a hundred acres) have proved to be about double their present requirement. It is proposed accordingly to admit "non-partner members."

The broad policy is to offer to the members and to their friends all the advantages of riverside-country-house life with boats, grounds and club-rooms of genuinely first-class quality and good, plain cooking, but with no unnecessarily expensive luxuries.

Enquiries for membership or applications to see the Club by appointment should be addressed to the Secretary, Major-General L. A. E. Price-Davies, V.C., C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., Lollebrook Manor, Cookham, Berkshire.

COMPANY MEETING

FRIENDS' PROVIDENT AND CENTURY LIFE

NEW BUSINESS FOR 1930 OVER £2,000,000.

The annual meeting of the Friends' Provident and Century Life Office was held on Wednesday at the Holborn Restaurant, London.

Mr. Harold J. Morland, M.A., F.C.A. (the chairman), who presided, said: The grand total of new assurances (including sinking fund assurances for £270,329) issued by the Friends' Provident and the Century during 1930 was £2,364,916, which was £273,960 more than for 1929, and £434,377 in excess of the amount for 1928. In 1930 the new business exceeded £2,000,000 for the second time. The amount of the claims was unusually high, being 88 per cent. of the "expectation." Nevertheless, so fortunate was the office in the range of policies which became claims that a profit of £83,000 from favourable mortality resulted, which was the largest sum accruing in any one year from this source in the experience of the office.

The productivity of the investments was well maintained. The gross rate of interest was 1s. 7d. higher at £6 1s. 4d., but the extra 6d. in the £ on the amount of income-tax nullified the increase in the gross rate, and reduced the net rate to £5 3s. 1d. As at December 31st, 1929, the directors declared a compound reversionary bonus on normal with-profit assurances at the rate of £2 2s. per cent. per annum for the five years then ended, and the directors have authorised the continuance, interim, of this generous scale of bonus. The Century has paid the usual 12 per cent. dividend on the paid-up capital, and after providing for all outgoings of the past difficult year, the balance carried forward on profit and loss account was £68,689, as compared with £103,546 brought in. The total funds of the company, including paid-up capital, were £3,415,643, an increase of £114,553 for the year. Notwithstanding the severe depreciation in Stock Exchange securities during the past two years, the book values were still covered by market values. The total funds of the Friends' Provident advanced during 1930 by £396,978, and amounted to £6,824,846. Inclusive of the resources of associated companies, the aggregate funds for the first time reached £10,000,000.

The report and accounts were unanimously adopted.

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H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES, K.G.,

WILL PRESIDE at the Annual Meeting of the Royal National Life-Boat Institution at the Central Hall, Westminster, at 2.30 p.m., and

PRESENT MEDALS TO LIFE-BOATMEN
for gallantry.

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